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HENRY CHAPLIN.

Presented by his constituents of Wimbledon, 1913.
By Linwood-Palmer and A. Talmadge.

HENRY CHAPLIN

A MEMOIR

PREPARED BY

HIS DAUGHTER

THE MARCHIONESS OF LONDONDERRY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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PREFACE

It had always been my father's wish that some account should be made public of the part he had taken in the spheres of politics and sport. For this purpose certain letters and memoranda are extant—the latter in many cases dictated by himself, and from time to time amplified. A selection of this material has accordingly been prepared.

In presenting this record of the events of a long life, I must, in the first place, acknowledge with dutiful thanks the gracious permission of H.M. the King to publish certain letters written to my father by His late Majesty King Edward VII. and Her late Majesty Queen Alexandra.

Next, I must express my warm sense of obligation to many helpers. I am deeply indebted to my friend, Miss Rose Bradley, for the time and trouble she has so generously bestowed, not only in the co-ordination of the documents bequeathed by my father, but in the preparation of part of the narrative. An old friend of my father and myself, whose desire for anonymity I am bound to respect, is responsible for the section on Racing. My friend, Mr. John Buchan,

has given me invaluable assistance in various sections, and has supervised with me the arrangement of the book.

For other services most kindly rendered by Helen Countess of Radnor, the Duke of Portland, Lord Lonsdale, Lord Charles Bentinck, Mr. Ernest Chaplin, Lieut.-Col. Charles Brook, Major E. C. Ellice, Sir Theodore Cook, Colonel A. Macauley, Mr. W. Danby, and Mr. Golding, I beg to express my sincere thanks.

I hope that this tribute of a daughter to the memory of her father may meet with some measure of approval from his many friends, and from the still wider circle to which for so many years he was a familiar figure.

E. LONDONDERRY.

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I

YOUTH. 1841-1868

"I OFTEN think", Mr. Chaplin said once, in a reminiscent mood, a few months before he died, "that Providence intended me to be a huntsman rather than a statesman. Horses and hounds have always been a passion with me from my earliest days, and always will remain so as long as I can get on to a horse at all." He spoke advisedly. He knew well that politicians will come and that politicians will certainly go. Sturdy fighter in and out of the House of Commons though he was, and staunch upholder of what he held to be the interests of his country, it is where horses and hounds and men are gathered together, and as long as racing remains the national sport of England, that the name of Henry Chaplin will be best remembered.

But when he died on May 29, 1923, it was universally felt that the world had lost more than an outstanding figure on the turf and in the hunting field—more than a great authority on agriculture—more than a singularly picturesque and lovable personality. The "Squire", as he was affectionately called by his friends, was all these things. But he was something else. In spite of his vigorous in-

dividuality, he was a representative—almost the last representative—of that type of landed gentry whose political and social influence had meant so much to Victorian England. He belonged essentially to that old school of country gentlemen to whom a long line of squires had bequeathed a tradition of responsibility to their country no less than to their acres.

Times have changed. Heavy taxation and lengthy periods of agrarian depression have given the squire of to-day, where he still exists, small chance of playing a prominent part in politics, or of maintaining that generous outlay on sport and that lavish hospitality which were a matter of course to his forebears. The great country houses where Victorian society met and Victorian politicians discussed Cabinet secrets, have mostly passed into the hands of strangers who belong to a different world and have inherited no traditions with the acres they have purchased, or they have lapsed into the unfeatured dullness of state institutions. This memoir of Mr. Chaplin has, therefore, the interest of a completed chapter to which there can be no sequel. It tells of men and women and modes of life that will not come again.

I

The Chaplins had been squires in Lincolnshire since the year 1658, when on the marriage of John Chaplin with Elizabeth Hamby, only daughter and heiress of Sir John Hamby of Tathwell in that county, they removed thence from Wiltshire. John Chaplin's father, Sir Francis Chaplin of the Clothworkers' Company, was Lord Mayor of London, and lies buried in



THE OLD FAMILY HOUSE AT TATHWELL, LINCOLNSHIRE.

the Church of St. Catherine Cree in the City, close to the grave of Sir William de Bouverie. It is a curious coincidence that at about the same time as the Chaplins left Wiltshire, Sir William de Bouverie's son Edward bought Longford Castle, almost adjoining their former property ; and nearly 200 years later, a daughter of the Chaplins (Helen, Countess of Radnor —Henry Chaplin's sister) married another Pleydell-Bouverie, and thus linked two families which had been long before near neighbours.

John Chaplin settled on his wife's property at Tathwell, and became High Sheriff of the county. The Hambys traced their descent direct from Walter Hamby of Hamby in the county of Lincoln, who lived in the time of King Edward I. They had all been more or less notable figures in their own shire, and more than one had married an heiress from another part of England, thereby adding not only substance to their money bags, but also quarterings to their coats of arms. Elizabeth Hamby's mother was daughter and sole heiress of Richard Porter of Lamberhurst in Kent, and her paternal grandmother, the wife of Francis Hamby, had been Magdalen Leeds, an heiress from Sussex. So Tathwell, which now passed by marriage to the Chaplins, was a very goodly heritage.

John Chaplin's younger brother Robert represented Great Grimsby in Parliament, and was granted a baronetcy, but, dying without a son, the title passed by special remainder to John's grandson and namesake, a son of Porter Chaplin. This young man died of the small-pox in 1730, after a few days' illness ; as he left no male heir and only a posthumous

daughter, the title became extinct and the property of Tathwell, which was entailed, went to his uncle Thomas, another son of John Chaplin. It is to Thomas Chaplin that his descendants owed the estate of Blankney, which he bought and made his home in 1719. From that date until the close of the nineteenth century, Blankney was the Chaplin home.

The demesne of Blankney had been the property of the Deincourts since the Conquest, until in the fifteenth century it passed through the marriage of an heiress to the Lovels of Tichmarsh. All the estates of the house of Lovel were, however, confiscated to the Crown by Henry VII., after the battle of Stoke-on-Trent, when Lord Lovel himself only escaped by swimming his horse across the river. Blankney was bought by the Thorolds, who did much to embellish the house with the fine carved panelling of the period. But in the reign of Charles I., through a marriage with the Thorold heiress, it passed into the hands of Sir William Widdrington, who was created Baron Widdrington of Blankney in 1643. Lord Widdrington's great grandson had the indiscretion to take part in the rebellion of 1715 ; he was taken prisoner at Preston and convicted of high treason, and though his life was spared his estates were confiscated in the following year.

A tradition of hidden treasure at Blankney Hall survived for more than a century. When Lord Widdrington was attainted it was said that, foreseeing the confiscation of his land, he endeavoured to secure as much of the movable property as possible by concealing it in secret places, and a legend ran that he had deposited a large chest of plate in a

vault beneath the great staircase. The family hopes, however, were dispelled when on one occasion, having workmen in the house, Mr. Charles Chaplin, uncle of the last squire, ordered the vault to be opened. The oak chest was there indeed, but it only contained a salt cellar of white metal and an iron ladle. Either Lord Widdrington had deliberately misled the Government treasure-seekers, or thieves had cheated posterity.

Three years later, in 1719, Blankney, twice the sport of political circumstance, was purchased from the Commissioners of Confiscated Property by Thomas Chaplin, who in the following year married Diana, sister of Thomas Archer, afterwards Baron Archer of Umberslade.

In the north chancel of the Church of St. Vedast at Tathwell the beautiful Hamby monument still remains. Beneath the shield bearing the Hamby arms and quarterings is a Latin inscription to the memory of William Hamby, Esq., who "peacefully fell asleep in the Lord on the 25th day of January, 1626". Below the inscription he kneels in a black robe at a desk with a book. Lower down on the monument are the figures of his brother Edward and his wife Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Francis Read of Wrangle, "who begat a numerous progeny" and were the grandparents of Sir John Hamby. On either side of these effigies, who also kneel at a desk, are three shields of the arms of the Hambys and Reads and their quarterings. A white marble slab of later erection is inscribed to the memory of John Chaplin, Esq., who died in 1714, and his wife Elizabeth, only daughter and heiress of Sir John Hamby.

On the other side of the chancel is a monument

to Thomas Chaplin on which the Latin inscription—translated—runs thus :

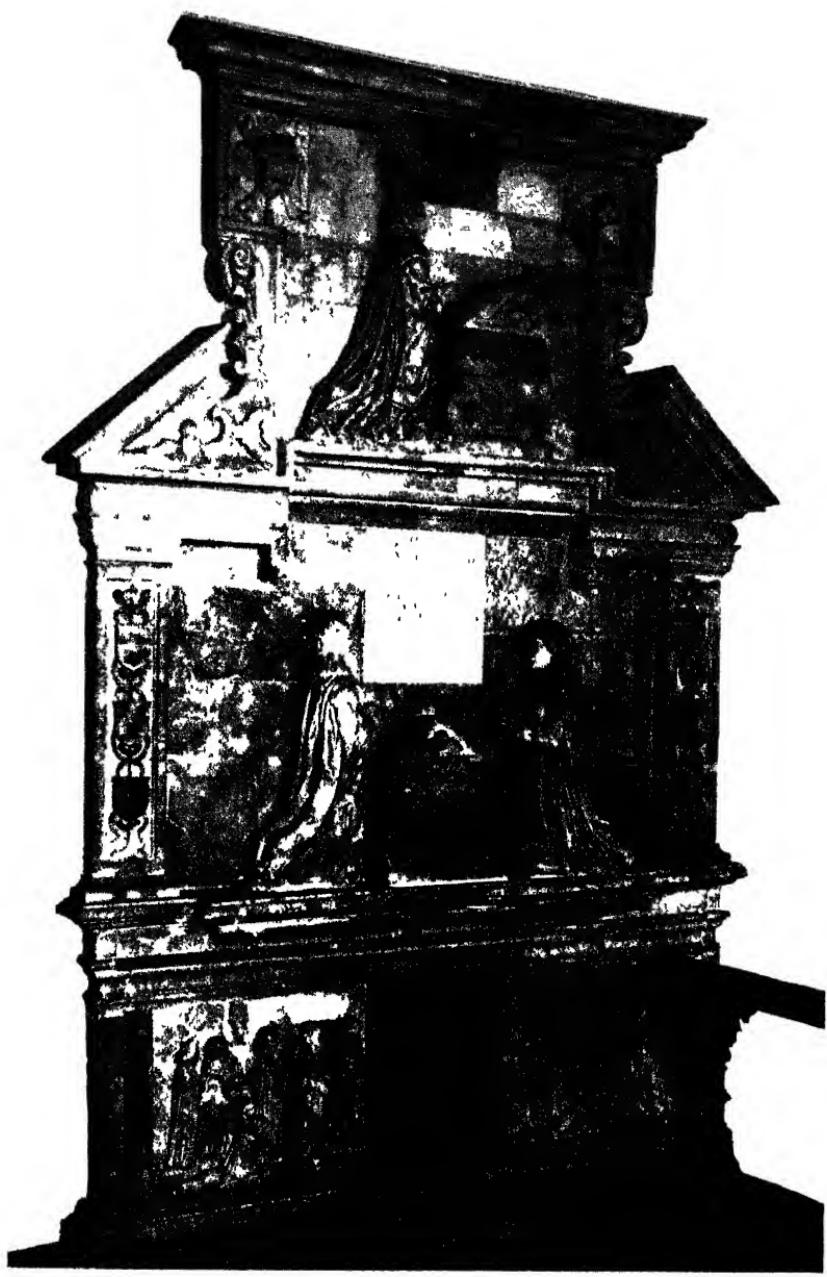
Sacred to the memory of Thomas Chaplin, Esq., a kind and blameless man, who having enjoyed a happy fortune and living honourably performed all the duties of life deserved to be buried in this place among the remains of his great grandparents whose simplicity he expressed in his character, nor will any fear shame his posterity if they are like him. He was born A.D. 1684 and died A.D. 1747.

This is followed by a tribute in verse which appears to include his wife :

The knot of love which twixt these two was knit
It held full fast till death untyed it.
Whoso in true and honest love do live
To such the Lord especial grace doth give.
Well may we hope they come to blessed end
Whom for their truth and love we may commend.

On one side of the monument are six sons kneeling, two of whom, one a youth and the other a boy, hold skulls in their hands denoting early death. On the opposite side kneel the seven daughters, three of whom bear skulls, while a fourth is a baby in swaddling clothes lying in a cradle.

Thomas Chaplin, as we have seen, inherited further the Tathwell estate on the death of his nephew Sir John in 1730, and became a person of "high consideration", both political and social, in Lincolnshire—the first of a long line of notable squires who followed him for 150 years in direct succession. He seems to have had some difficulty over the inheritance of Tathwell, for he writes rather testily, referring to Sir John's executors or the lawyers : "The gentlemen have pretty well fleeced the estate



THE HAMBY MONUMENT IN THE CHURCH OF ST. VEDAST AT TATHWELL,
WITH THE WHITE MARBLE CHAPLIN SLAB ADDED BY THEIR DESCENDANTS

that they need not be squeezing for more, and if they had signed the Conveyance sooner, the money would have been ready, and it is not reasonable that anybody should pay for their neglect."

His daughter Diana married in 1749 Lord George Sutton Manners, a son of the Duke of Rutland, while his elder son and heir John formed an alliance with another great house by his marriage with Lady Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of Brownlow, Earl of Exeter. Lady Elizabeth, being for long an only child, was regarded, even until after her marriage, as Lord Exeter's sole heiress, but ultimately a son was born to him. Had it not been for the birth of this child, the further great inheritance of Burghley would have come to the Chaplins. As it was, Lady Elizabeth brought some very beautiful plate into the family—in compensation, it was said, for the loss of the property. This included a vast silver wine cooler, the size of a bath. The story of its acquisition is as follows : On one occasion when her husband was staying at Burleigh, Lord Exeter after dinner pointed out to his guests a silver wine cooler which he was perfectly prepared to give to any of the gentlemen present, if they could carry it out of the dining-room. Thereupon John Chaplin went down on his hands and knees and, after great difficulty, managed to get the wine cooler on his back and crawled out of the room with it.

It must have been immediately after the marriage of Diana Chaplin, and probably in honour of that event, that a masquerade was held at Blankney Hall, of which a list of some of the principal guests and their impersonations has been preserved. Thomas Chaplin

having died in 1747, his son John, who was not yet married, was presumably the host on this occasion. He chose for himself the character of Henry VIII., and if he enjoyed the same splendid proportions as his descendant, the last Squire, his choice was justified. An old yellow torn sheet of paper has been preserved on which in faded ink is written :

**A LIST OF THE COMPANY AS THEY DANCED
AT THE MASQUERADE AT BLANKNEY, THE 9TH JANUARY 1749**

Lord George Manners	<i>A Spaniard</i>
Mr. Glover	<i>A Rich Vandyke</i>
Mr. Chaplin	<i>King Harry the 8th</i>
Mr. C. Chaplin	<i>A Huzzar</i>
Mr. Amcotts	<i>A Venetian Dancer</i>
Mr. Nevill	<i>Mercury</i>
Sir Francis Dashwood	<i>Pluto (King of Hell with a Little infernal boy bearing up his train)</i>
Mr. Pownall	<i>A Vandyke</i>
Mr. Thornton	<i>A Dancer</i>
Capt. Bell	<i>A Chimney Sweeper (in black Satin)</i>
Duke of Kingston	<i>In a Gold & White Domino</i>
Mr. Carter	<i>A Priest</i>
Major Gibbon	<i>Queen Elizabeth's Porter</i>
Mr. Dashwood, Bro ^r to Sir Francis	<i>A Russian</i>
Mr. Stevens	<i>A Black Domino</i>
Mr. Porter	<i>Mercury</i>
Mr. Foster	<i>A Domino</i>
Mr. Willis	<i>A Sailor</i>
Mr. King	<i>A Vandyke</i>
Mr. Rich ^d Welby	<i>A Hungarian</i>
Lady Vere Bertie	<i>A fair Maid of the Inn</i>
Lady Tyrconnel	<i>A Spanish Lady</i>
Miss Wheat	<i>Rubens' Wife</i>
Miss Thornton	<i>Flora</i>
Miss Disney	<i>Violette</i>

Miss N. Amcotts	<i>The Rising Morn</i>
Miss Carter	<i>Queen of the Scots as a widow</i>
Lady Thorold	<i>A Spanish Lady</i>
Miss Mainwaring	<i>Representing Night in a Black Gown with Stars</i>
Miss Maddison	<i>A Country Girl</i>
Lady Dashwood	<i>A Vandyke</i>
Miss Bertie	<i>A Dancer</i>
Miss Bet Hales	<i>An old-fashioned Lady</i>
Mrs. Willie	<i>A Country Girl</i>
Miss I. Cust	<i>Italian Dancer</i>
Miss King	<i>Aurette</i>
Miss N. Welby	<i>A Quaker</i>
Mrs. Porter	<i>A Turkish Lady</i>
Miss Hales	<i>A Country Girl</i>
Miss Lucy Cust	<i>An old Lady</i>

COMPANY THAT SAT BY

Lady Vere Bertie	<i>An Italian Peasant</i>
Lord Tyrconnel	<i>In a blue & silver Domino</i>
Colonel Armiger	
Young Mr. Wills	<i>Capt. Flask</i>
Mr. Middlemore	<i>In a Pink Domino</i>
Mr. Villarial	<i>Scaramouch</i>
Mrs. Chaplin	<i>An Old Woman</i>
Lady George Manners (the Bride)	<i>A Jardinier</i>
Mrs. Wills	<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>
Miss Truman	<i>Columbine</i>

Among all this motley crowd, not the least imposing figure was probably that of Sir Francis Dashwood, appropriate in the character chosen, since he was one of the most prominent supporters of the Hell Fire Club.¹

¹ He was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Wilkes described him as one who "from puzzling all his life at tavern bills was called by Lord Bute to administer the finances of the Kingdom which were 100 millions in debt". He was the founder of the Society of the Franciscans at Medmenham Abbey, where the door was surmounted by the motto, "Fay ce que voudras", and where he played the part of an immoral buffoon for the amusement of Privy Councillors and Members of Parliament.

While the adjoining church of St. Oswald's (from which the late Henry Chaplin took his title) was practically rebuilt in the nineteenth century, Blankney Hall was fortunate in escaping the destruction that befell so many castles and houses confiscated at different times owing to the political views of their owners. It has been modernised and altered at intervals according to the taste and the standard of comfort of the period, but to this day it retains all the spacious dignity of an old English country house.

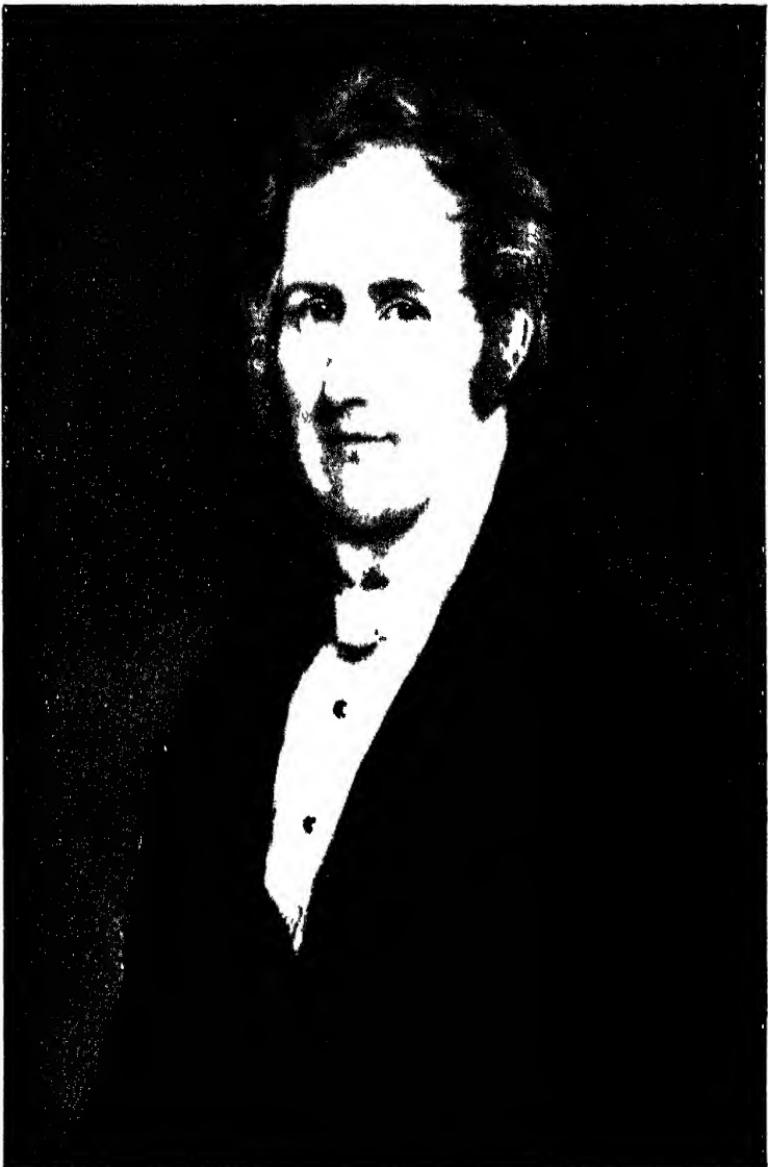
II

Henry Chaplin was born on December 22, 1841,¹ at Ryhall Hall near Stamford, being the third son of the Rev. Henry Chaplin, the Lord of the Manor and Rector of the Parish, and of Caroline Horatia, a daughter of William Ellice of Invergarry, M.P. for Great Grimsby, and niece of Horatio Ross.

His father, like all the Chaplins, was a great horseman and follower of hounds, and his children were taught to ride from infancy. He was a country gentleman of the old type as well as a clergyman, and his sons had every opportunity of acquiring that taste for sport and an open-air life which was to be one of their most marked characteristics. Ryhall is close to Burghley, and Lord Exeter, regarding the Chaplins as belonging to his own family, allowed the young people the run of the house and land which had so nearly been their own.

The Rev. Henry Chaplin died in 1849 while his children were still young, and though their mother

¹ There was some doubt as to the year of his birth. See p. 148.



THE REV HENRY CHAPLIN

took a house in London, in Montagu Square, the greater part of their happy childhood was spent with their uncle Charles Chaplin at Blankney. The latter, who represented Lincolnshire in Parliament from 1818–1832, had married Caroline Fane, a granddaughter of the 8th Earl of Westmorland. He had no children, and Harry, the subject of this memoir, after the death of his two brothers, was brought up as his uncle's heir.

Charles Chaplin was a survivor of a most ancient order of squires. A complete autocrat on his own land, and owning property in three counties, it was said of him that he could himself return no fewer than seven members to Parliament, since to vote the way the Squire ordered was the whole duty of the good tenant. He was regarded with universal respect and a good deal of awe, and was a perfect terror to the poacher. It is told of him that on one occasion when he was sitting on the Bench a young lawyer from London, who was present, ventured to criticise a pronouncement of the Squire's as not legal. "Young man," thundered Mr. Chaplin, as much astounded as he was affronted by the interruption, "you are evidently a stranger in these parts or you would know that my word *is* law."

Harry as a small boy was sent to Mrs. Walker's school at Brighton, and it was here, while his family were staying in the place, that he suffered his first real grief in the death of his elder and much-loved sister Harriet, who had been his special companion. He was inconsolable at her loss, and his little sister "Mattie" (Helen, Countess of Radnor) relates that she earned the one and only snub of her life from

"Brother Hal" by her well-meant efforts to heal the wound, with the pious platitudes derived from her nurse.

Mrs. Henry Chaplin—"Mrs. Henry" as she was always called at Blankney to distinguish her from her sister-in-law—was thirty years younger than her husband, and took the place of a daughter to the old Squire and his wife, since she lived so much with them after her husband's death. She was a woman of remarkable ability and of great strength and sweetness of character. She had a wonderful head for figures and was of immense assistance to the Squire, who was Chairman of the Great Northern Railway, which in 1849 only extended to Essendine, a few miles beyond Peterborough. Her daughter can remember her seated constantly before sheets of beautifully neat figures, being the balance sheets of the railway company which she prepared for the use of the Squire, but she was never too busy to attend to the interests, or to listen to the chatter, of the younger members of her family. On their journeys by road from Ryhall to Blankney they travelled in what was known as the "chariot", and Mrs. Henry, finding the interior of the vehicle stuffy, was in the habit, when the weather was fine, of sitting outside in the rumble. When this was impossible and they had to sit inside, her little girl suffered a good deal from the swaying motion of the "chariot", and she can still remember the entertaining conversation with which her mother throughout the long hours distracted her attention from a physical uneasiness which she herself probably shared.

Blankney was an ideal home for children, and the

Joys and their sister do not seem to have found their uncle at all alarming. They were allowed plenty of scope for their high spirits and love of outdoor exercise. They rode the ponies he provided for them—the boys teaching their small sister to ride as well as themselves—Harry, all his life an entirely fearless rider, leading the way over the jumps, but taking care that the little girl should run no unnecessary risk. Very many years later he rewarded his pupil by referring to her as one of the best judges of a horse that he knew; and there could scarcely be a higher compliment from one Chaplin to another.

In all matters pertaining to sport, and indeed in most others, the young Chaplins had a perfect counsellor and friend in their neighbour, Lord Henry Bentinck. He was at the time Master of the Burton Hunt, and Mr. Charles Chaplin was his principal supporter—subscribing £1200 a year. Lord Henry taught the children everything that they had to learn about horses and hounds, and they were proud indeed when he told them that the hounds which had been “walked” by them were among his best. He was a kind of fairy godfather to them all in his own strange way; Harry in especial owed him much, and in spite of the difference in age, there was a close and lasting friendship between them.

Though sport, and above all riding, was naturally the main preoccupation of the children during their holidays, Blankney provided other interests. Their uncle ruled, as we have said, in the autocratic fashion of the squires of his day over his many thousand acres and the picturesque village, but it was a benevolent despotism. The young people were known

and welcomed by all the neighbouring tenants, and Harry, the future squire, had very early in life the opportunity of acquiring that intimate and affectionate knowledge of the land and the farmers which was to serve him so well in later life.

Among the old customs which still survived at Blankney was the Blankney Feast, and a record has been kept of one of these held in 1847. The first event is "seven shillings to be run for by donkeys" (best of three heats). We can picture the future M.F.H. and owner of Hermit, at six years old, astride a donkey, urging his mount with youthful zeal and precocious judgment to the winning post; or perhaps coerced by a stern nurse to content himself with backing the favourite—as much as he could see of it over a thoughtless barrier of the voluminous skirts of the period. Other items in the programme include "A cheese to be won by men jumping in sacks", and "A pig with a soaped tail, to be run in all classes by boys under fourteen years of age : to be caught by the tail and dropped over the shoulder". The final item in the programme is "five shillings for a jingling match to last twenty minutes"—for which entertainment the reader may consult the pages of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. So serious and sportsman-like were the whole proceedings under the direction of the Squire, that a steward and a clerk of the course were appointed, and "no dogs or cats allowed on the course by order of the steward or whom he may appoint".

III

From his dame's school at Brighton, Harry Chaplin went with his brothers to Harrow, but for various reasons he left early and was sent to a private tutor, Mr. Furneaux, at Walton, Northamptonshire, to be coached for Oxford. There is not much record of these years, but it may be gathered from his mother's letters, all of which he carefully preserved, that he enjoyed life to the full and committed all the minor and proper indiscretions of a healthy, high-spirited schoolboy.

Throughout his life he had a profound zest for the simple material pleasures of existence. It was a part of that infectious power of enjoyment which kept him young, and which it was impossible for his companions of the moment not to share with him. But to a wise and affectionate mother, the attendant dangers upon what she felt to be a form of self-indulgence were naturally apparent. Her son's light-hearted expenditure in "tuck shops" called for a serious warning.

"I send you a sad batch of bills to look over," she writes in 1857, "and I am sure you will feel sorry when you see how much they amount to, particularly when you remember that almost the whole of this large sum was spent in less than three months. . . . It seems very dreadful to think of throwing away so much money upon eating and drinking when so many are starving! But I won't say any more about it now, my darling boy, as I hope and trust it will be a lesson to you for the future, and that you will ever remember how wrong it is to buy what you have not the money ready to pay for. You cannot think the mischief and miseries it leads to, or the good which must arise from exercising a little self denial.

" I have no doubt they cheat very much at these eating shops, and I do not at all like to pay their bills, but it must be done."

And then, having done her whole duty for the moment in reprimands, Mrs. Henry thankfully turns to congenial matters, gives him some account of the guests staying at Blankney, and begs to be told which day he is returning for his Easter holidays, "as Uncle Charles wants to know on account of the mare".

Even as a schoolboy—when he could find time for it—Harry Chaplin was the excellent letter writer which he remained all his life. " I was very glad to get your nice long letter," writes his mother. " Never be afraid of not having enough to tell me. Everything you do interests me." She not only kept up a regular and intimate correspondence herself with her boys, but wisely endeavoured to help them at times with what they regarded as their duty letters to their elder relations. " I think you ought to write to Uncle Willy¹ and that he would be much pleased to hear from you. He is so kind that you will not have much difficulty in writing to him. Thank him for his kind letter and tell him you will try to follow his good advice, which I earnestly hope and pray you will, my own dear child. (This was presumably at the time of the boy's confirmation.) And then you can tell him all about Mr. Furneaux and how you like him and your companions and all about Walton."

Mrs. Henry was at this time living wholly at Blankney, her sister-in-law being much of an invalid, and she was constantly engaged in entertaining the

¹ Mrs. Henry Chaplin's brother, William Ellice—one of Mr. Chaplin's guardians.

Squire's guests. In February 1857 she writes to her son on what was probably his first entrance into society away from home, when he was already, at the age of sixteen, an acknowledged social success.

You gave a charming account of all your gaieties. I think you write *very* nice letters if you could but improve in the handwriting. I am very glad you enjoyed yourself so much and got on so well. It was very kind of Lady Willoughby asking you to dinner—I liked your going there and to Lady Mordaunt's ball very much. I think the Leamington one was rather *an extra*, but I suppose it was only for once in a way, and now you must be very steady and studious to show us that you are not the worse for all the gaiety ! ! !

And again a month later,

I like your nice letters very much, but I am not sorry you were bored at the Leamington ball, as I am sure you would have been much better at Walton.

Harry, like all her children, was deeply attached to his mother, but at seventeen he was naturally ready to grasp with both hands the pleasures and adventures that life brings to a handsome and popular and, above all, happy-natured young man. With proud and loving anxiety Mrs. Henry strained her eyes to the horizon of that fair sea of fortune on which her eldest son was about to set sail. But she did not live even to see him embark.

IV

Harry Chaplin matriculated at Christ Church, and went up to Oxford in January 1859. In the previous July he had suffered a severe blow in the death of his

mother. Mrs. Henry Chaplin's death was a very real grief to all those who knew her and whose affection she had won by her remarkable character, by her intelligence no less than by her sweetness. To her children the loss was irreparable : to the three young boys at school, to the little girl of twelve, now to be left so much alone with her uncle at Blankney, and certainly not least to her eldest son, just emancipated from the discipline of boyhood and about to start on his university career. Mrs. Henry had shown more than ordinary maternal discernment where her son Harry was concerned. The loss of her intelligent and far-seeing counsel was to mean much to him and his fortunes.

The elder Mrs. Chaplin followed her in November, and the old Squire, doubly bereaved, felt the full burden of responsibility towards the young people left to his care. From his letters to his nephew, which have been preserved, glimpses may be had of the latter's life at Oxford during his first term. On February 5 the Squire writes, on hearing that the young man has suffered the common fate of freshmen of recognised means and position at the hands of the Oxford tradesmen : " You appear to have been sadly plundered on your first arrival at Oxford, but it is, I suppose, no use grumbling. I enclose you an order for £15, but you must recollect this makes up more than the first quarter's allowance. Therefore you must be very careful. I am sorry to hear you have so little to do. If you apply to the Dean I have no doubt he will order you to attend some more lectures." This ingenuous advice was apparently ignored, but the old Squire writes again a month later :



HENRY CHAPLIN.

Aged 19, 1859

I began to think it was a long time since I heard from you when your letter arrived. I have been at Tathwell the last three days and had other letters to write before I went that I could not answer yours sooner. I was in hopes you would have told me the names of the set you generally live in at Christ Church, as I suppose by this time you are able to give some information as to those with whom you chiefly associate, as it is of the greatest importance not only to your present comfort, but also to your future prospects after leaving Oxford, to have formed a good acquaintance there, particularly as you left Harrow so young.

I was at Brickenden about a fortnight since, and I arranged with your Uncle Russell that when you had ascertained what quantity and sorts of wine it was desirable to order, you should write to him and request him to order it for you, and the bill to be sent to me. I will pay it and shall charge it as a part of your allowance. I should not recommend you to order a large quantity, as it is very probable if you do that some of it will be stolen.

I hear Lord H. B. [Henry Bentinck] has had some good sport and found plenty of foxes, particularly on this side, but the country is now getting very raw and dry. I am going to London to-morrow to attend a Railway Board. Mattie is very well.

There is something pathetic in the efforts of this old and childless gentleman to attend to the interests of each member of his adopted family, and to keep pace with the doings of a young man at the University, which, no doubt, he found strangely altered in the fifty years which had elapsed since his own undergraduate days. It is evident that, in common with all parents in all ages, he discovered Oxford to have become an amazingly extravagant place for the next generation.

In March he writes again :

I congratulate you upon being elected into the Christ

Church Club. At the time I was at Oxford, there were no clubs for undergraduates that I ever heard of. It does not appear that many of your intimate friends are members of the Club. I can hardly think your vacation will be as early as you suppose, but I shall be glad to see you whenever it occurs. I have ordered the mare to be ready for you. Teddy¹ writes that his vacation will not begin till the Wednesday before Easter; Harrow is to be on the 12th or 18th.

Meantime, as an undergraduate, Harry Chaplin was enjoying himself extremely. As long as King Edward VII. lived, he remained one of his intimate friends, and the Prince of Wales's set to which he belonged in his Oxford days was naturally composed of young men of birth and fortune whose interests at that age were concerned rather more with the pleasures of existence, and especially with sport, than with the academic side of university life. A photograph has been preserved of the Bullingdon Club in 1859, of which he was a prominent member. Among the others were Sir Frederick Johnstone, Bart., who, later, was member for Weymouth, and until his death in 1913 was one of Mr. Chaplin's closest friends; Sir William Hart Dyke, Sir George Grant, Tom Baring, and George Lane Fox.²

These young men hunted and raced and entertained their friends and one another, and were entertained at Blenheim and Nuneham and other great houses in the neighbourhood. Some of them in preparation for their future careers talked politics at the Union,

¹ Edward Chaplin, born 1842, second surviving son of the Rev. Henry Chaplin; Lieut.-Col. in the Coldstream Guards; represented the City of Lincoln in Parliament 1874-80; died 1883.

² Eldest son of George Lane Fox, for many years Master of the Bramham Moor hounds.

but for the majority attendance in the lecture room occupied an inconsiderable portion of their time.

To acquire a knowledge of the kind of life which suited him, and to make congenial friends, seems to have been Harry Chaplin's main preoccupation at this period. Life smiled upon a young man who smiled back as pleasantly as he did, and the death of the old Squire, in May 1859, left him, in his second term at Christ Church, master to a greater extent of his own actions.

To his grandson, Lord Castlereagh, he once gave an account of his college days. From this we learn that he had four hunters of his own at Oxford, an unheard of number in those days, and, in addition, he had the "command" (the word he used) of eighteen horses belonging to a cousin, a banker, which were stabled at Bicester, the cousin being unable to hunt before January. With a stud of this size he hunted six days a week, and it was very rare indeed for him to spend a whole day in Oxford.

But if life smiled upon the young man, the authorities were inclined to be less lenient. It had not infrequently occurred that Harry Chaplin had been summoned to the handsome and commanding presence of Dean Liddell and lectured for some such venial offence as the wearing of hunting kit under his surplice in Cathedral. One morning, however, the matter proved to be more serious. The familiar blue slip reached him at breakfast and he made haste to obey its summons. But on this occasion the Dean greeted him with all that impressive severity before which more than one generation of delinquents was destined to tremble.

" My dear Mr. Chaplin," he began austerely, " as far as I can gather you seem to regard Christ Church as a hunting box. You are hardly ever in college, and I must request you, unless you change your habits, to vacate your rooms and make way for some one who will benefit from his studies during his residence at the University." The reply was remarkable even to one so familiar with the vagaries of youth as Dean Liddell. " But, Mr. Dean, what do you expect me to do ? " " Do," replied the Dean, " you must go in for an examination." " My dear Mr. Dean "—and the undergraduate's answer this time in spite of its suavity, was not unmixed with mild reproof—" if only you had told me before, I should have taken the necessary steps ; but when is there one ? " " In three weeks," was the curt reply.

The ingenuousness of Harry Chaplin's attitude may be partially explained by the fact that he was what was known in those days as a gentleman commoner, living out of college. In the 'sixties it was not the custom at Christ Church, as it is to-day, to allot every freshman immediately he comes up to a tutor, who will arrange his scheme of work with him for the first year, and instruct him as to what examinations he is expected to take. Harry Chaplin, entirely occupied with matters which seemed to him of greater moment, was genuinely ignorant and had taken no pains to inform himself of what was academically expected of him. But throughout his life it was his habit to do with all his might whatever his hand found to do, provided it were a sufficiently reasonable or pleasurable occupation. So, on this occasion, being impressed by the Dean's arguments, he lost no time in



1861

Sir F Johnstone Mr Peppys.
Mr Dyle Mr Baring.

Mr Chaplin Mr H Prince of Wales.

Sir G Grant

Hon. H. Somerville

THE BULLINGDON CRICKET CLUB

securing the services of a coach whom he described as "an old bottle-nosed man", but with whom, his abilities diverted into this fresh channel being no less effective than his energy, he worked so well that he passed Mods. with distinction.

It was not long before another blue slip reached him at his breakfast table. This time the Dean addressed him with an entirely cordial, if dignified, approbation. "Mr. Chaplin, I must congratulate you on your excellent performance. But now I must earnestly entreat you to go in for the Honours Schools. You have shown us your abilities, and you will become a credit, not only to this house, but to the University if, as I confidently expect, you are successful."

But the Dean was once more to meet with the unexpected from this apparently amenable undergraduate. The taking of a degree had been no part of Harry Chaplin's programme at the University. "When I left Oxford", he used to say in later life, "I went for my education in big game shooting to America"; and it is probable that his mind had been fixed for some time upon this other and, as he then considered, more important branch of education. He felt that by his recent success he had done all that could reasonably be expected of him in his college career. "Mr. Dean," he replied politely, "if only you had told me before, I would have done so, but after my last interview with you, in which you intimated that I should have to vacate my rooms, I am very sorry to inform you that I have arranged to go for a trip to the Rocky Mountains."

v

Here, indeed, was authority set at nought, but in so suave and so definite a fashion as to be unanswerable. History does not relate whether the Dean attempted a remonstrance, but, as his surviving guardians raised no objection, Harry Chaplin went down from Oxford in 1860. It was owing to the influence of his great uncle, the Right Hon. Edward Ellice, that the projected big game shooting expedition was made feasible. Mr. Ellice, who had been member for Coventry¹ and one of the Secretaries of the Treasury in Lord Grey's Administration, became Secretary at War in 1833 and held that office in Lord Melbourne's Government of 1834. He was familiarly known as "Bear" Ellice—for his "wiliness", says Carlyle, but in reality for his close connection with the fur trade. His grandfather had been a merchant in New York, and his father, Alexander Ellice, taking the English side in the War of Independence, moved to Montreal and became managing director of the Hudson Bay Company, for which he supplied much of the capital.

Edward Ellice went out to Canada in 1803 to engage in the fur trade, and it was at his suggestion that in 1820 the competing Canadian fur companies were amalgamated; the Hudson Bay Company, of which he was made Deputy Governor, being given the right of exclusive trade for twenty years. Mr. Ellice had inherited large landed estates both in Canada and in New York State, and in early life he was busily

¹ Mr. Ellice, as a Liberal, was on nine occasions elected member for the borough, his return being contested except at the election of July 1852.

engaged in colonising them. By his marriage¹ he became closely connected with the Whig Party, and as an English statesman he played a distinguished part. He refused a peerage, though the sacrifices he had made to politics were very considerable. At Glenquoich, his place in Inverness-shire, his hospitality was the delight of his friends and his young relatives.

In 1861 Mr. Ellice's active and helpful interest—at the age of eighty—in his great nephew's projected expedition was naturally of inestimable value. Harry Chaplin's chosen friend, Sir Frederick Johnstone, was to accompany him, but as this young man was under age and a ward in Chancery, it was not permissible for him to go to so great a distance without an elder and more responsible person. Mr. Ellice was fortunate in procuring for the purpose the services of his friend Dr. Rae, later Sir John Rae, the Arctic explorer and famous scientist, who in the course of his geographical survey of the northern coasts of America had discovered the remains of the Franklin expedition in 1854. Later Dr. Rae had been appointed surgeon to the Hudson Bay Company, and in 1858 Mr. Ellice had made a tour with him through the United States. To shoot buffalo on the plains and ultimately to reach the Rocky Mountains in pursuit of grizzly bear was the intention of Harry Chaplin and his companion, and with this inspiring programme before them they shook the dust of Oxford from their feet, made their preparations and left England in the spring of 1861.

But in New York they found interest of yet another

¹ The Right Hon. Edward Ellice married Lady Hannah Grey, daughter of Charles, first Earl Grey—widow of Captain Bettesworth.

kind awaiting them. Civil war between the Northern and Southern States was declared four or five days after they landed. The forced surrender of Fort Sumter in South Carolina, to the Confederates on April 11, had acted as a live coal to inflame the patriotic passion of the people in the Northern States. This insult to the American Flag could only be wiped out by war, and on the 15th April Lincoln issued his proclamation.

The two young men were naturally in no mind to desert immediately a scene which promised so much dramatic interest. The introductions which they had brought from Mr. Ellice, apparently enabled them to see something of the outbreak of hostilities at close quarters. Harry Chaplin has unfortunately left no written record of his experience, but it is clear that he succeeded in making friends with General Grant, and that the latter made him a present of a pony which he subsequently brought back to England. It appears that he also witnessed from a distance the loss of the great national armoury at Harper's Ferry, which was part of the Confederate design to capture Washington.

The sympathies of the upper classes in England at this time were mainly with the South. Abraham Lincoln's policy was as yet an unknown quantity on this side of the Atlantic. Mr. Edward Ellice, who had visited the United States repeatedly and had a close acquaintance with the politics, had seen the inevitability of the Civil War and its enormous cost. In a letter to Harry Chaplin, which reached the latter in Canada, he expressed in uncompromising language what was probably the opinion of the majority of

Englishmen on the outbreak of the war, who had any first-hand knowledge of America.

I have half a century's experience of the people in the Northern States, and have always considered them the most calm and about the most cold, calculating and sagacious sect of the whole race. By what miracle they have been driven mad it is impossible to fathom, but their conduct, in the opinion of every man of intelligence in this country, seems only suitable to the inmates of a lunatic asylum. We look upon the whole scene as Bedlam turned loose and in vain for any keeper to restore order or act physician in the character of statesman to restore them to some reason.

I sympathise sincerely with them in their complaints of their Southern countrymen, but what then? The question is, which was the least of the evils in their manner of dealing with the situation as the last Government left it? They have clearly chosen the worst one of civil war. If they had temporised, done whatever was calculated to secure the Border States, even to the extent of admitting secession of the others—and there are many classes of the Southern people quarrelling with one another—these states would at least have come back in gratitude for escape from dangers through which they found it too difficult to guide themselves. Instead of this they have been rushed blindly into civil war, which, be it successful or not in its military incidents, must defeat all hope of reunion. If they succeed, they can never maintain their dominion as we did in Ireland by a standing army, or reconcile their brothers, so many of them slain in the contest, to associate again in a common government. If they fail, what calamities may not ensue from failure? . . .

Mr. Ellice died in 1863 before he had time to realise that, thanks to the wisdom and forbearance of Lincoln, the worst of his prognostications were not to be fulfilled.

Meantime, even these most stirring events could not long detain the two young Englishmen from their

real purpose. So, no doubt reluctantly, they turned their backs upon fighting which did not after all concern them, and in company with Dr. Rae, set their faces northward to Toronto. From Toronto they travelled in four days to St. Paul, and thence after nine days more they reached the Red River, the navigation of which was in itself something of an adventure.

Mr. Chaplin used to describe in later life how they arrived at Fort Garry, afterwards Winnipeg, in a canoe made out of the hollowed log of a large tree. They found only one stone house and six enormous wooden houses surrounded by a palisade. These were the headquarters of the Hudson Bay Company, where the Red River hunters disposed of the furs which they had collected from all parts of the regions to the north and west. The hunters and trappers remained at the settlement all the winter, and in the spring, when the snow had gone, they were ready for new expeditions. They killed buffalo, of which in those days there were vast quantities on the prairies in the winter, when the coats were long and silky, and they also did a large trade in dried meat from buffalo flesh cured in the sun and in pemmican.

Even at this age and with his mind and body fully occupied with new and engrossing experiences, Harry Chaplin seems to have shown himself the good correspondent which his mother had found him as a schoolboy. "Everybody is delighted with your letters," writes Mr. Edward Ellice from Glenquoich, where he was as usual entertaining a large house party, "and from the spirit and health in which you set out on your western adventure, I augur well of the

result of your travels. *Dimidium facti, qui bene coepit, habet.* All things, even your muddy voyage down the Red River, seem to have prospered with you."

Harry Chaplin and his party remained a month or more at Fort Garry, while Dr. Rae collected a small army of men and horses in readiness for the journey to the mountains. These were placed under the leadership of a famous guide, James Mackey, a Scotch half-breed, a man whose character and individuality made a lasting impression upon the young Englishman. Dr. Rae's interest in the expedition was naturally scientific, but in the account which he gave of it in the following year before the Geographical Society, he remarked that "the two young gentlemen whom he accompanied were anxious to kill any and all kinds of game. They travelled over several hundred miles before they could kill an animal larger than a badger. They had the ablest hunters in the country, all picked men, the Red River half-breeds, and their object was entirely to kill game—yet that was the result of their hunting. They would have starved had they not carried plenty of provisions with them."

Dr. Rae reported that the party travelled very hard, having excellent horses—two to each man. After sixteen or eighteen days they came within 150 miles or eight days' journey of the Rockies. Beyond this, it was destined that they should go no farther. The very formidable obstruction in their path was nothing less than the appearance of the Black Foot Indians, a wild tribe living far from civilisation, and now, as it happened, on the war-path.

The Red River hunters and the buffalo runners entirely refused to go through their country. The situation was apparently complicated by the presence in their party of a negro who was acting as cook. The hunters declared that if they approached near enough for the Indians to catch sight of this man, they would insist at whatever cost upon having his scalp, and would pursue them relentlessly until they got him. Nothing would induce them to go a yard farther; even the threats and persuasions of James Mackey were unavailing. So there was nothing for it but to abandon their main aspirations—the Rocky Mountains and the grizzlies. The twelve horses were put back into the twelve carts which accompanied them and the whole party returned in the direction from which they had come.

From a scientific point of view the expedition seems to have been more satisfactory. Dr. Rae was able to establish the latitude of several points on the route and to rectify the position of other places. He also reported to the Geographical Society the discovery by his party of the existence of two salt lakes of considerable size situated among the elevations of the Côteau du Prairie in the neighbourhood of Moosejaw which had not previously been placed on the map. He named these the Lakes Chaplin and Johnstone in honour of his young companions. History does not relate how far the latter found consolation in their scientific privileges for the sport to which they had so ardently looked forward. To one at least of them, however, in later years, it was a constant source of entertainment that the lake named after him should originally in the Indian language have

been called "The Witches' or Old Squaws' Lake", and that, in the first new map published after the receipt of Dr. Rae's information, it appeared as "Chaplin, or the Old Wives' Lake". Thus it may be found in the *Times Atlas* at the present day.

VI

After his mother's death the paramount influence on Harry Chaplin's life was that of Lord Henry Bentinck. In spite of the disparity of age, Lord Henry had been a good friend to him and to all the family from boyhood. As the young squire grew up the friendship became closer, and Lord Henry was also his guide and mentor on all matters pertaining to sport.¹ He was still master of the Burton Hunt when Henry Chaplin came of age, and the latter continued his uncle's subscription of £1200 a year. When in 1864 he wished to be relieved of the mastership Mr. Chaplin bought the hounds from him for £3500.

For some years during the hunting season Mr. Chaplin lived in Lincoln at the old house at Burghersh Chantry. Blankney was on the outskirts of the country, some of the meets being thirty miles distant, while Lincoln was much more central. In consequence he saw a great deal of Lord Henry, who lived what he called his "vagabond life" at an inn in Lincoln, the White Hart, where he had a bedroom and a sitting-room. He had also a first-rate cook and an admirable cellar of his own. Some of Mr. Chaplin's reminiscences of this remarkable man, which in part will be familiar to the readers of Lord Beaconsfield's *Life*, may be set down in his own words.

¹ See pp. 198-208 and 260-69.

Lord Henry and myself were constantly together. I used to dine with him at his hotel and sometimes he used to dine with me and I saw a great deal of him. Everything I know of sport of all kinds he taught me, except racing, and a good deal of politics too. On one occasion when I was dining alone with him after a day's hunting, he told me that in days long gone by it was he and his brother, Lord George Bentinck, who had been the means of enabling Disraeli to become the proprietor of Hughenden, where he lived for the rest of his life.

The way in which Hughenden was acquired was described to me by Lord Henry as follows : Lord George, who was bitterly opposed to the policy of Sir Robert Peel and his particular proposals for the repeal of the Corn Laws, was at that time working hard in Parliament with the aid and assistance of Disraeli, and came down to Welbeck after a hard session, apparently out of spirits and rather downcast and worried, which was most unusual for one of his indomitable courage and ardent spirit. His brother naturally asked him, "What's the matter, George ? You don't seem like yourself. Have you got any trouble that is depressing you ?" "Yes," he said, "I have a great trouble, and it is this. I have found the Party the most wonderful man the world has ever seen, and I cannot get these fools to take him as leader because he is not a country gentleman."

At this Lord Henry burst out laughing, which Lord George was inclined at first to resent. Then he asked him this question, "Is that your only trouble, George ? If so, the remedy is perfectly simple. Make him one, George ; make him one. . . ." Lord George understood at once what he meant. "If you are ready to help me," he said, "you are right. The matter is perfectly simple."

Now none of the three Bentinck brothers was married, and none of them was likely to marry, and the Duke, their father, was probably the richest man in England at that time. So the three combined had the command of any amount of money that they wanted. Lord George gave instructions forthwith to one of the principal land agents in

London, to find at the earliest moment that he could a country residence within easy reach of London, which would be suitable for a prominent politician, or even for a man who might soon be in the position of Prime Minister.

This arrangement was quickly carried out by the agent, who secured the offer of the property at Hughenden, which happened at that time to be in the market. This information was conveyed by Lord George, I believe, to Disraeli, and upon such terms by way of mortgage and the interest to be paid thereon as would enable Disraeli with all propriety to take advantage of it.

All this was told me by Lord Henry Bentinck himself on one occasion when I was dining with him alone at Lincoln.¹ But what he did not tell me was this; and I did not learn it till Mr. Buckle published the *Life of Lord Beaconsfield*. What I learnt was that after Lord George's death, it was Lord Henry Bentinck who greatly helped Mr. Disraeli to the leadership of the Party, by the work and energy which he displayed in securing for him the support of many of the most prominent and powerful leaders of the Party. This is amply recognised by Disraeli in the pages of the third volume of Mr. Buckle's fascinating work.

Lord Henry Bentinck's was in some respects a strange and hard character, though a strong one and capable of the utmost generosity. He was always said to be the favourite son of his father, the then Duke of Portland, and it was some time after the death of Lord George Bentinck that an unfortunate quarrel arose between Lord Henry on the one side, and his eldest brother, Lord Titchfield, on the other, and they ceased to be on speaking terms. What it was about I never knew, but it was a question in connection with some property which had been left to Lord Henry in Scotland,

¹ The story is to be found in the *Life of Disraeli* by Monypenny and Buckle, iii. pp. 147-152. Mr. Chaplin was misinformed on one point; there was no intervention on the part of a house-agent. The Disraeli family knew Hughenden well, as it was within easy reach of Bradenham. Disraeli's father, in the last year of his life, "busied himself to secure for him that permanent home in the country, on which both father and son had set their hearts" (*loc. cit.*, page 148).

I believe, in regard to which he was convinced that Lord Titchfield had behaved badly. Later the Duke became seriously ill, and he died without ever seeing Lord Henry again.

Lord Henry at that time represented in the House of Commons one of the Nottinghamshire scats¹ which, as happened in those days, were more or less under the control of the Duke of Portland. Mr. Denison, afterwards Lord Ossington, who had married one of the Duke's daughters, Lady Charlotte Bentinck, and became Speaker of the House of Commons, represented another, and when the next election came, for reasons best known to himself, Mr. Denison thought himself justified in denouncing Lord Henry on the hustings. . . . This created a tremendous sensation in Nottinghamshire. Lord Henry left the county, vowing he would never set foot in it again; and he never did.

Meantime, Mr. Denison, who had made this attack upon Lord Henry, was elected Speaker when Parliament met. In his position as Leader of the Tory Party, it fell to Mr. Disraeli to follow the then Prime Minister in congratulating the Speaker-elect upon the position which he had achieved, and this he did in language which perhaps may have been somewhat exaggerated. Lord Henry told me that after all he and his brothers had done for Mr. Disraeli he did not like it, but after thinking it over he determined to say nothing about it. He afterwards received a long letter from Mr. Disraeli, explaining why he thought it necessary to say what he had done in his speech about the Speaker. Lord Henry's expression to me was that "his letter damned him, and I never will speak to him again".

But now comes a still more remarkable part of the story. The elder brother, who had now become the Duke, had always been a Peelite and so out of sympathy with Mr. Disraeli's politics. Lord Henry, in order to avoid any possible danger of Lord George Bentinck's intentions being interfered with by Mr. Disraeli being disturbed in his possession of Hughenden, said to me, "I posted up to London the

¹ Lord Henry was Member for North Notts, 1846-57.



LORD HENRY BENTINCK

Taken in his room at Tathwell

moment I became aware of it, went to the Jews and borrowed enough money to pay off sufficient of the debt to prevent the possibility of Mr. Disraeli being ever disturbed in his possession of it." I always remember the expression "posted", though I do not know whether it meant he merely hurried up, or that the loop line to Lincoln *via* Boston was not then made.¹

¹ The following unpublished letters which passed between Disraeli and the fifth Duke of Portland show the relations of the two men :
Confidential.

June 22, 1857.

I cannot resist the conviction that it wd. be more than ungracious on my part, were I to permit the confidential relations wh. have so strangely subsisted between us to terminate in silence.

I am aware of the personal interposition wh. your Grace made on my behalf at the time of the catastrophe. It must have cost you great pain and solicitude, and it merited, & obtained, my gratitude. I am not insensible to the forbearance wh. I have experienced from Your Grace during the last two years.

A course of kind & considerate conduct wh. has ranged over so long a period, whatever the motive, ought not to be disregarded by the recipient, & I wish to offer my thanks in terms, not conventional, but cordial.

Having relieved myself so far, I would hope that Yr. Grace may not be offended, if I express myself with equal frankness on another point. It has been impossible for me, from observations that have occasionally dropped since the death of the late Duke, to resist the inference that Yr. Grace was of opinion that I had taken advantage adroitly of circumstances, & dexterously installed myself in a profitable position.

The time has come when I can touch upon this matter with. embarrassment.

And in the first place I neither suggested nor sanctioned the original scheme, & if it be thought that I yielded with too great facility, it may be remembered that I was acting under the influence of a person whose position and whose character were alike commanding.

With respect to the subsequent results, the accounts of the estate have been regularly kept, and it appears by the balance wh. has been recently struck, that the pecuniary loss of the project to myself has been little short of ten thousand pounds.

I feel assured that Yr. Grace will bear these unreserved remarks with a manly spirit. There is nothing so painful as to be misjudged by those from whom, whatever may have been the cause, you have received favours, & whom you respect.

I have the honour to remain, Your Grace's obliged & faithful servt.,
B. DISRAELI.

HIS GRACE, THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

HARCT. HOUSE,
June 23, '57.

SIR—I hasten to acknowledge the receipt this afternoon of your letter of yesterday's date, & to express my very great regret that you should have felt it in the slightest degree called for or expected.

Whether Mr. Disraeli ever knew this or not I do not know. I do not think he did, and I believe there was only one other man besides myself that ever did, unless it was the late Lord Rothschild or his father Baron Lionel, who was greatly in Mr. Disraeli's confidence. But if he did not know it, it shows what a judge of human character he was, from something he said to me after Lord Henry's death.

When Disraeli was leader of the Party, he used to give on the night before the meeting of Parliament a Party Dinner, at which the Queen's speech was read, and unlike what has been the practice in more recent years, instead of confining his invitations to members of the existing Government alone, he used to ask members whom he considered, I suppose, to be more or less prominent in the Party. Amongst these he was kind enough to include me.¹

I can assure you nothing has ever fallen from me to justify the impression you refer to from "occasional observations".

It was very unfortunate that I should have had to take any part whatever in what has passed, but unavoidable, and I could but endeavour to reconcile as well as might be contending duties.

The whole subject has been a most embarrassing one, & I felt from the first it was impossible I could ever enter in it in detail personally with yourself, and you will forgive me for continuing to abstain from doing so. I much regret the pecuniary loss you mention having sustained, but trust it has been more than counterbalanced in your mind by the high position you have attained.

I have the honour to be, your very obedient servant,

SCOTT-PORTLAND.

THE RT. HONBLE. B. D'ISRAELI.

¹ Mr. Chaplin is not quite exact. He has confused two functions. When in office the Leader of the Party in the House of Commons gives a ceremonial dinner to his Front Bench colleagues of the Government, and also invites the Speaker and the Mover and Seconder of the Address. At this dinner the Leader reads the gracious speech from the Throne. The Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons also gives a dinner on the same evening at which he reads The Speech, of which, by courtesy, he receives a copy from Downing Street. To the Opposition dinner the Leader invites the members of his Front Bench, and sometimes also other members of his political connection who may not have held office. In 1871 the Conservatives were in Opposition and Mr. Disraeli gave his dinner, as Leader of his Party in the House of Commons, and there was nothing unusual in Mr. Chaplin being honoured with an invitation. This dinner must have been on February 8, as the Parliamentary Session opened on February 9.

Lord Henry Bentinck had died, I think, on the last day of 1870,¹ and the Party Dinner was given quite early in the following year, 1871. As I was shown into the room, Mr. Disraeli said to me, "Both you and I have lost a great friend since we last parted." I replied, "Yes, Sir, I know that poor Lord Henry and you were great friends at one time, and he has often talked to me about you in those days." "Ah!" said Disraeli, "that is true, and I always wished it could have remained so." And then, after pausing a moment, he went on to say this, "I always said of Henry Bentinck that, taking him all round, I think he was probably the ablest man I ever knew, and with some eccentricities of character he combined the highest qualities of human nature in a greater degree than any I ever was acquainted with." This was a tribute, coming from a man such as Mr. Disraeli, which was indeed striking. It was as just in my opinion as it was striking, in view of the sacrifice which Lord Henry had made from regard for his brother's memory and aspirations, for a man with whom he was at that time not even on speaking terms.

A curious instance of the more eccentric side of Lord Henry's character occurred on one occasion when King Edward as Prince of Wales came down to stay at Burghersh Chantry for a week's hunting. Lord Henry did not approve of the Prince of Wales coming to hunt. He had apparently a morbid horror of being supposed to toady anybody. He had, however, a reputation for being the finest whist player in Europe and the Prince was particularly anxious that he should come and dine at the Chantry and have a rubber with him. This, to my extreme annoyance, Lord Henry refused to do.

The Prince came up to me, soon after we got to the Meet, which I had arranged for him at Wellingore Gorse, and said, "I wish you would introduce Lord Henry Bentinck to me." I said, "Certainly, sir," and I brought him up and introduced him. The Prince began in his charming manner—"I understand, Lord Henry, you hunted the county for a great

¹ This is correct.

many years and with great success." "Yes, sir," said Lord Henry, "I was king of the county once, but they deposed me as happens to other crowned heads at times." That was the sort of man he was. He did not want to toady him. He told me what had happened, and said, "I don't think he will trouble me much more to-day." I was horrified.

But whatever Lord Henry's eccentricities of conduct, all of us who knew him intimately, my brothers and sister and his few Lincolnshire friends, regarded him with admiration and real affection and always spoke of him as "dear old H. B."

He died in a house at Tathwell which he had built for himself, where I had lent him the shooting—10,000 acres with lots of game at that time—and he was buried in the church-yard at Tathwell, where he still lies, though his brother, who had some correspondence with "Little" George Bentinck on the subject, intended at one time to have him interred later at Welbeck.

When I heard by telegram from my brothers, who did not realise what the position was, for I believe he was dead already, that he had been taken suddenly and very seriously ill, I ordered a special train and got Prescott Hewett, a great doctor and surgeon of that time, to go down with me at once to see him.

They had had a hard day's work out shooting in the Wolds with the snow almost up to their knees. Lord Henry had had nothing but tea and toast for breakfast, and refused to have any lunch, taking only a small glass of the brandy for which he was famous.

Walking home that night with Canon Pretyman, the father of the present owner of Orwell, as they parted at the turn for Lord Henry's house, the latter asked him if there was a good doctor in Louth. Pretyman replied that there was a very good man and begged to be allowed to send him out at once, but this Lord Henry declined, saying he would send for him if he required him. On getting home he had a hot bath and went to bed, desiring his servant to say that he wasn't well and would not come to dinner himself, but

that his guests were to order for themselves what wine they liked best. Then he went to bed and died, I believe, in his sleep from heart failure very shortly afterwards.

None of them, not even his servant, seemed to be aware that he was ill, and when Prescott Hewett saw the body after we arrived, he expressed the opinion that if he had had a basin of soup, a glass of wine or some brandy and water when he came home instead of the hot bath, he would probably have been as well as ever he had been in his life.

For myself, I can only say this of him—of a man of another generation altogether than mine—he was my oldest, and greatest friend, and I felt for him great admiration, deep affection and profound respect. He taught me all I know of sport, of horses, hunting, hounds and deer-stalking, and a good deal of politics also.¹

Mr. Chaplin had also kept an interesting record of the famous quarrel and duel between Lord George Bentinck and Squire George Osbaldeston, the particulars of which he appears to have received from Mr. George Payne, who was on intimate terms with both parties to the dispute :

Mr. Osbaldeston and Mr. Horatio Ross,² the famous deer-stalker, were probably the two most celebrated pistol shots in England of their day. At that time letters were usually sealed with small round wafers, which were made by stationers in twelve different colours. A not uncommon practice, I was told, in pistol shooting, was to stick these wafers on a target in a straight line, one above the other about two inches apart, and when the word of command was called out, in quick succession the marksmen had to fire at the colour

¹ An old man who was a lad in the hunting stables at Lincoln at the time of Lord Henry's death, relates how two teams were taken down from London to Blankney and driven over to Lincoln by Henry Chaplin and Mr. George Lane Fox on both the days of the sale. In fulfilment of an old promise, Henry Chaplin bought his wonderful collection of brandy—52 dozen bottles, some of it dating back to the early eighteenth century. "If anything happens to me, Harry, you will look after my brandy," he had said.

² See p. 255.

named. Each of these men was frequently able to hit each of the wafers in succession without a single miss.

Lord George, on the other hand, I believe, was only a moderate shot at best, although in years to come, during the debates on the Corn Laws, he was frequently either called out by offended opponents, or called out others himself. Indeed, old General Peel,¹ who was a contemporary—and, though a brother of Sir Robert, a member of the Tory Party,—used to tell me that there was seldom a big debate on the Corn Laws that he had not to spend a considerable time in either taking or receiving challenges on account of Lord George, who was very outspoken about his opponents.

I remember one duel being fought in my own time between the late Sir Michard Bulkeley and Colonel Armitage, but they had to fight in France. There were three other instances also, where people were called out and would have had to fight had the causes of the quarrel not been settled.

The case I speak of arose from the running of Mr. Osbaldeston's horses at Heaton Park in Lancashire—(which was at that time the property of Lord Wilton, so well known in Leicestershire, and ranked as the Goodwood of the north of England)—they had run with two different horses of Lord George's in two different races, I believe on successive days, but at all events during the same week. In the first race Osbaldeston's horse, which was backed apparently for a good deal of money, ran nowhere and was badly beaten.

The next day that he ran he had to meet another of Lord George's horses, against which, according to the running of Mr. Osbaldeston's horse the previous day with Lord George's other horse, he could have no chance. Lord George, who had the reputation of being a first-rate judge of form, and in particular of that of his own horses, was in the habit,

¹ Jonathan Peel [General] was the fifth son of the first Sir Robert Peel, but a man possessing more geniality than his father and more manners than his eminent brother. At the secession of the Peelites he remained staunch to his Party and served as Secretary of State for War under Lord Derby in 1858 and 1866. He was devoted to racing. In 1824 he ran second in the Oaks to Cobweb with his mare Fille de Joie, whom he had bred; and he won the Derby of 1844 with Orlando, after the disqualification of Running Rein.

according to Payne, of occasionally laying against horses which in his opinion could have no chance, as well as backing those he thought would win. Accordingly, when he found Mr. Osbaldeston's horse, which had been so badly beaten on the first day, being freely backed on the second, he laid £400 against him.

He was more than surprised when this horse of Mr. Osbaldeston beat his own horse, who on the previous running had any amount of weight in hand, and won in a canter. He said nothing about it then, but told his commissioner not to pay Mr. Osbaldeston's claim for £400 on the following Monday at Tattersall's. In those days owners and backers of horses generally attended the settling at Tattersall's themselves, which was situated then on what is now the site of St. George's Hospital.

Nothing happened on the first Monday or the second, but on the third Mr. Osbaldeston went up to Lord George and said, "My lord, you appear to have forgotten that you owe me £400 for Heaton Park and haven't put it in your account." Lord George replied, "Do you mean to say, sir, that you dare to ask me for the money for that robbery—for it was a robbery, and you know it."

Mr. Osbaldeston never wanted pluck, whatever else he may have lacked, and he sent him a challenge at once. Everybody was aghast, for Mr. Osbaldeston was furious at the insult, and if the duel was fought it was almost certain he would kill Lord George.

Lord George's friends did everything they could to induce him to say something which might prevent it, but in vain. At last a certain number of them got together and asked him to allow them to write a letter which might be sufficient to prevent the duel. To this he agreed, but only on condition that it was brought to him to see and was not to be sent without his permission. It was arranged he should see it at White's Club the following afternoon, the duel being early the next morning. It was duly handed to him the next day at White's, and this, according to George Payne, was what happened.

He read it slowly and carefully all through, and he read it slowly through once again. After that he deliberately tore the letter up into small pieces and he threw them into the waste-paper basket. "No," he said, "it's no use. It was a robbery. D——n the fellow, I hate him, and I won't withdraw a word."

Every one was in despair and considered him as doomed. But it didn't appear to affect him in the least.

The matter, however, didn't end there. Payne, as I have said, was an intimate friend of both. In later days at Goodwood, when Lord George gave up racing for politics after the great betrayal by Sir Robert Peel, it was Payne who first took over the whole of his racing stud with all its liabilities, for £10,000, with the right, however, of paying forfeit (£300) next day if he so desired after looking into them. As a matter of fact he paid forfeit.

Payne was also intimate with Mr. Osbaldeston, who was Master of the Pytchley Hounds certainly once, and I think twice, in Northamptonshire, where Payne had a house and a fine property of his own at Sulby, and was also at one time Master of the Hounds himself. He determined to see Osbaldeston that night, and knew exactly where to find him, at the Portland Club, where he played whist every day. Thither he repaired that night some time after twelve o'clock.

Payne found him playing, and told him he must come out and see him at once as soon as the rubber was finished. This Mr. Osbaldeston was very loth to do, objecting to give it up, but Payne insisted and took him out into the street. There he marched him up and down saying everything he could think of to induce him not to kill Lord George Bentinck. But Mr. Osbaldeston was adamant, furious at being publicly insulted in the way he had been, declaring that he could and should kill him like a dog that morning ; that he was as good as a dead man then ; that he thoroughly deserved it ; and that nothing would induce him to change his mind.

This went on, till between three and four in the morning, when, getting angry himself at last with this obduracy, Payne turned round to him face to face and said,

" Well ! ! if you kill George Bentinck, for the rest of your life you'll be the most miserable man that ever lived, for there isn't a gentleman in England who will ever speak to you again. For they all believe that what George Bentinck said was true, and what is more, I believe it myself ! "

Upon that he said Mr. Osbaldeston dropped both his arms by his side, and stood staring into his face with his mouth open for at least half a minute. He then turned round without a single word and walked away. George Payne was convinced, he said, that he had made up his mind not to kill him, and in that, no doubt, he was right. For while Lord George escaped untouched himself, according to Payne his bullet cut a hole in one of Mr. Osbaldeston's whiskers, which he described as being of the kind called mutton-chop whiskers, whatever that may mean.

What a proof of the courage of both these men ! Lord George stuck to his text throughout, though it would oblige him to fight the most deadly shot in England, while Mr. Osbaldeston, who had determined to do nothing to defend himself, knew well that he was opposed to a bitter and determined foe who would do his best to wound or kill him. He was also probably aware of what had been said of Lord George by people who knew him well—that while there was nothing in the world he wouldn't do to help a friend he would go three times round it to injure or defeat a foe.

There was something of that spirit, too, I sometimes thought, in Lord Henry, the brother whom I knew so well, who seemed constitutionally unable to forgive what seemed to him a deliberate wrong.¹

¹ Mr. Chaplin's version of this historical encounter and of the circumstances which led up to it have been deemed to be of such interest as to make it desirable to refer it to Sir Theodore Cook. The accomplished editor of the *Field* has recently published the Diary of George Osbaldeston, and by his enterprise and research has permanently enriched the literature of this period in regard to racing and hunting. Sir Theodore's commentary upon Mr. Chaplin's note is as follows :

" I observe that it is said that Lord George Bentinck laid £400 against Osbaldeston's horse whose name was Rush. Either Mr. Payne or Mr. Chaplin was inaccurate about this, for Mr. Payne was backing Rush so heavily that the odds went down from 10-1 to 2-1, and at the starting-post for the Gold Cup on Friday, September 25, 1835, Lord George Bentinck offered Osbaldeston

VII

It is not to be supposed that so handsome and eligible a young man could for long escape falling in

200-100 against Rush which was taken. After Rush had won in a canter, Lord Wilton, Lord George Bentinck and others would not speak to Osbaldeston in the weighing room, but William Scott said, ‘Squire, you have done us this time.’ Osbaldeston answered, ‘Yes, Will. You know I am just twelve miles farther north than you are (alluding to their residences), and it is high time we should give you a rap on the knuckles to prove to you and to handicappers that we have seen through them for a long time.’

“Mr. Chaplin is right in saying that Rush came in last in the Manchester Stakes of Thursday 24th at Heaton Park, when he was entered as owned by Mr. Ruthven, and there is no doubt whatever that in this race Osbaldeston pulled his horse, for he says himself that, ‘Rush was such a beautiful horse to ride that they could not detect any roping’. But this was not the only curious feature of the race, for Lady de Gros, ridden by Lord Wilton, was given as the winner, though she had been palpably beaten by Whitefoot, for which the judge (Orton) was soundly abused by everybody. But there was more in it than this. Another incident was that Osbaldeston, having bought a four-year-old named Rush by Humphrey Clinker out of Wire, own sister to Whalebone (the General Stud Book gives Rush’s dam as Vermilion, and so does the card at Heaton Park), tried him over the St. Leger course at Doncaster in 1835 at 6 o’clock on the morning of the St. Leger—a very wet one. He tried Rush against a fast five-year-old mare belonging to Marson, the trainer, giving her 10 lbs., but soon after the mile Osbaldeston, riding Rush, found he could give the mare a stone. He saw that several persons were watching at the finish; so he stopped Rush and let the mare win.

“There is no doubt that Lord George knew of this trial and therefore betted against Rush at Heaton Park on Friday for the Gold Cup, being confirmed in his opinion by the running of Rush the day before in the Manchester Stakes; but Osbaldeston was determined to stop the practice which had arisen at Heaton Park by which John Scott’s horses (trained for Lord Wilton) usually won owing to the handicappers favouring them. These same handicappers evidently paid very little attention to Irish horses (Rush’s dam belonged to Lord Sligo). I may add that George Payne accepted a commission from Osbaldeston to back Rush for £500, and did so at 5-1, getting 10-1 for himself, but backing him so heavily that, as has been stated, the starting price went down to 2-1 in the Gold Cup, which Lord George Bentinck laid.

“Mr. Chaplin, or Mr. George Payne, is also at fault with regard to the settlement at Tattersalls. The Heaton Park races were always a clear week after Doncaster, and Osbaldeston had to go cub-hunting, so he asked George Payne to get the £200 from Lord George Bentinck at the Newmarket October meeting, but George Payne rather puzzled Osbaldeston by advising him to apply to Lord George himself in the spring. There was never any question of Tattersalls.

love. Tall, and in those early days also slim, Mr. Chaplin was always carefully dressed, and to be one

"Accordingly, at the Spring Meeting at Newmarket (a considerable time after the Heaton Park Meeting), Osbaldeston saw Lord George, with his back to the iron railings, looking very black, 'with a sort of savage smile on his countenance.'

"Osbaldeston said, 'My Lord, I believe you owe me £200 which you lost to me on the Cup at Heaton Park.'

"*Lord George*: I wonder you have the impudence and the assurance to ask me for that money. A greater robbery was never committed by any man on the public, and the Jockey Club thinks so too; and I have a great mind not to pay you at all.

"*Osbaldeston*: You must pay me. You don't think, my Lord, that this matter will end here . . . etc. . . .

"*Lord George*: I suppose you can count?

"*Osbaldeston*: I could at Eton.

"Lord George took the notes out and paid him.

"Payne would not act as second for Osbaldeston in spite of having won so much money himself on Rush, and as it was the last day of the Spring Meeting Osbaldeston had to go to London, where he found a Mr. Humphrey to act as his second, with Colonel Anson acting for Lord George, who would neither meet Osbaldeston nor apologise. Osbaldeston then let Colonel Anson know that unless Lord George apologised Osbaldeston would go to Tattersalls and pull Lord George's nose.

"I may interpolate here that it is known that Lord Wilton was a little disappointed at the small entries at Heaton Park for 1834, which shows that Osbaldeston's view of the situation in 1835 was shared by a good many others, and that Osbaldeston's effort to beat the handicappers in 1835 had the sympathy of very many.

"I also think that Lord George was less cautious than he might have been in betting 2-1 against Rush at the start, when he must have known that the odds had gone down from 10-1 quite suddenly.

"Now, as to the duel. The description given in Mr. Chaplin's note of Payne's conversation with Osbaldeston outside the Portland Club is near enough to what I have published on page 214 of the Osbaldeston Memoirs, though I rather prefer my own version, and I may call attention to the last paragraph of my own note in the passage mentioned. Of one thing I am certain, that neither man was touched in the shooting. Certainly Lord George was not a good enough shot to hit Osbaldeston's whiskers, which were extremely small and rather like old Meredith Brown's. Of course, there is no knowing what a bad shot might do, but Lord George fired directly the word was given, and Osbaldeston only fired afterwards, which meant that he had time to wait; and a man who could hit an ace of diamonds at thirty paces was not likely to miss the commanding figure of his antagonist. I have no doubt in my own mind that Osbaldeston did not wish at the last moment to kill Lord George, or he would have done so; and, realising that whatever may have been his motives his restraint might be interpreted as

of the best-dressed men about town in the 'sixties, when the laxities and concessions to comfort of later times were unknown, was in itself a serious profession. He had bright chestnut hair and a fresh complexion which he retained to the end of his life. His blue eyes, though small, were extraordinarily keen and humorous, and nobody who knew him, even as an old man, will forget how they could smile even while the rest of his face remained perfectly grave. Added to this, he was always overflowing with health and spirits and an infectious joy of life. Susceptible himself, it was small wonder that he was attractive to women, and as his rent roll at this time was considerable, many mothers were disposed to encourage the eyes of their daughters to turn to so desirable a quarter.

It was the more unkind of fate to deal him at the very outset of his career a blow as humiliating as it was undeserved, and one from which only a buoyant nature could have so happily recovered. In the summer of 1864, he fell in love with Lady Florence

weakness, he wrote in his Memoirs that he felt sure there was no ball in his pistol. This statement would have been equivalent to charging both seconds with attempted murder had it not involved the corollary that there was no ball in Lord George's pistol either. The seconds instantly closed the whole matter, as they had the right to do, and Lord George at once walked away without a word. Lord George had deliberately risked his life for what he considered to be the principles of honest betting on the turf, principles which he allowed no man except himself to interpret. He deserves every credit for his courage, but I must believe that on mature reflection Lord George saw that there was something to be said for Osbaldeston or he would never have let it be known through old John Day that he would be glad if Osbaldeston would not oppose Lord George's membership of the Bibury Club, and still less would he have allowed Osbaldeston to visit his stables at his own invitation. Lord George never knew the meaning of an olive branch : he was as stern an enemy as he was a faithful friend, and he never forgave. He must, therefore, have eventually come to the conclusion that his original opinion of Osbaldeston's proceedings, and his subsequent conduct to Osbaldeston, were not entirely justifiable."

Paget, the only daughter of the second Marquis of Anglesey. She was one of the reigning beauties of that season, and from her tiny figure was usually known as the "Pocket Venus". The engagement was a brief one, and the marriage of the young couple was to be one of the chief events at the close of a brilliant season. Congratulations poured in, and the Prince of Wales, "as an old Oxford friend", to use his own expression, was one of the first to write his good wishes to the prospective bridegroom.

The tale of Lady Florence's elopement with the last Marquis of Hastings has been told very often, and, like all tales of the kind, with many variations. At the time it provided such a sensation as does not often come to stimulate the jaded members of London society in mid-July. The truth is only slightly less picturesque than the legend which has been usually accepted.

It was only a few days before the date fixed for the ceremony that the blow fell with dramatic suddenness. Felicitations and presents had been received, the invitations to the wedding had been issued and every detail arranged. The young Squire, proud, happy, and unsuspecting, was busy, in the intervals of the social claims of the London season, in preparing Blankney to receive his bride. On a certain Thursday in July Lady Florence paid a visit for the day to her future home and went round the stables and kennels with Mr. Chaplin to inspect the recent improvements. The following evening they were together at the Opera, and on Saturday morning she showed herself to her father in her wedding dress, which had just been sent home.

The popular legend has it that she afterwards went out driving with Mr. Chaplin and disappeared at the door of Marshall & Snelgrove's—to reappear ultimately as the wife of Lord Hastings. As a matter of fact, it did not happen in this manner, and the story probably arose from the fact that she had been constantly seen driving with Mr. Chaplin in the Park in his smart "cab" with the little tiger standing up behind and a single horse stepping "up to its nose". On this fateful morning, Lady Florence, on the plea of making some final purchases, drove alone—unattended by a servant, which was unusual in those days—in her father's brougham to the Vere Street entrance of Marshall & Snelgrove. She walked straight through the shop to the door in Oxford Street where she was met by Lord Hastings, and the two were presently seen by a common friend driving in a cab in the direction of Euston. There are many who may have cause to be grateful that a beneficent Providence intervened to prevent them from marrying their first love, but happily few suffer so cruel an awakening.

Lady Florence had kept her secret well. The letter which reached Mr. Chaplin at his rooms in Park Lane was an overwhelming surprise.

July 1864, Saturday.

HARRY—To you whom I have injured more deeply than any one, I hardly know how to address myself. Believe me, the task is most painful and one I shrink from. Would to God I had had moral courage to open my heart to you sooner, but I could not bring myself to do so. However, now the truth must be told. Nothing in the world can ever excuse my conduct. I have treated you too infamously, but I sincerely trust the knowledge of my unworthiness will help you to bear the bitter blow I am about to inflict on you.

I know I ought never to have accepted you at all, and I also know I never could have made you happy. You must have seen ever since the beginning of our engagement how very little I *really* returned all your devotion to me. I assure you I have struggled hard against the feeling, but all to no purpose. There is not a man in the world I have a greater regard and respect for than yourself, but I do not *love* you in the way a woman ought to love her husband, and I am perfectly certain if I had married you, I should have rendered not only *my* life miserable, but your own also.

And now we are eternally separated, for by the time you receive this I shall be the wife of Lord Hastings. I dare not ask for your forgiveness. I feel I have injured you far too deeply for that. All I can do now is to implore you to go and forget me. You said one night here, a woman who ran away was not worth thinking or caring about, so I pray that the blow may fall less severely on you than it might have done. May God bless you, and may you soon find some one far more worthy of becoming your wife than *I* should ever have been.—Yrs.

FLORENCE.

This latter hope was in course of time to be fulfilled with another and a very different Florence, but the rest of the letter can hardly have been consolatory. It must have added to Mr. Chaplin's mortification to know that the woman he was in love with had thrown in her lot with a man who was quite unfitted to make her happy. Lord Hastings might have been the model for a sensational hero of the fiction of that period.¹ At the time of his runaway marriage he was already in bad health and threatened with financial catastrophe, but nothing was allowed to interfere with his determination to win Lady Florence, and there was perhaps a further attraction in winning her from so popular a person as Henry Chaplin.

¹ See p. 298.

The latter's friends and relations, many of whom felt in their hearts grateful for what they regarded as his escape from a disastrous marriage, rallied round him in this tragic situation. Mr. Chaplin, sorely wounded in his affections and still more in his pride, set off almost immediately to Scotland to seek that peace and serenity of mind which never failed him in his mother's country.

We find Lord Henry Bentinck writing to him, as an old friend, with affectionate candour.

I was very sorry to miss catching you at Blankney. I have had two or three letters from Doneraille, touching the Hounds question. He had been on the point of writing to you direct, when that event occurred which will have annoyed you so much, but which all your *true friends*, and you have many . . . look upon as a blessed deliverance, and Doneraille thought that it was not the time to annoy you with any trivial matter. . . .

Mr. Chaplin did not for the moment feel disposed for the company even of his best friend and mentor, and went straight up to the Reay Forest, which he had rented for the deer stalking.

A month later Lord Henry writes :

If you will only open your eyes to the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, then the wound will become callous at once. Otherwise, neither Scotland nor exercise, nor three score years either, will heal such a sore. "Experto Crede."

The healthy interest of sport, fresh air and exercise, wise counsel and the warm family affection which surrounded him, helped to restore his spirits, and his naturally sane outlook upon life was not long in reappearing. Ultimately he decided to go to India for a year, again with Sir Frederick Johnstone, to

seek escape from the speculations of the curious, and to complete his recuperation of mind in new surroundings and the novel adventure of tiger shooting.

As time passed Mr. Chaplin's feeling of outrage naturally became less acute. The violence which his pride and his affections alike had suffered from Lady Florence's treachery had cured his infatuation for her. It was not in his nature to brood for long over an injury. Whatever he continued to feel about Lord Hastings, he had probably not been long in forgiving the lady, with whom casual encounters in the same social set were inevitable. On her part Lady Hastings had soon realised her mistake. She had found herself married to an irresponsible rake, who was ready to risk everything to gratify the desire of the moment, the risk being half the pleasure, and who, having won her by so bold a stroke, seems to have tired quickly of her company. It would not be surprising if her thoughts turned often and regretfully to that other whom she had so unscrupulously deserted. Pathetic little notes, written on the miniature writing paper with its blue or pink border and its disproportionately large monogram, which it was the fashion to use in the 'sixties—the envelope about two inches square, too small to trust to the post, and almost too small, one would have supposed, to be carried safely between the finger and thumb of a tall footman—began in course of time to find their way to Mr. Chaplin's rooms. "You don't know how awfully happy you have made me by speaking to me to-day," she writes in the first of these. "It was so good and kind of you, and it is the first bit of sunshine I have had in my life for months. I only hope now we shall always

remain the best of friends. I so often think of your words that if ever 'I wanted a friend I should find one in you'. God knows I want one at the present moment. Whatever I may have caused you to suffer once, I am paying bitterly for now, as my life is too utterly miserable, and I have nothing on earth to look forward to. I know I ought not to write in this way to you, but I cannot help it."

Hermit's sensational triumph in the Derby of 1867,¹ which played a part in causing Lord Hastings' ultimate ruin, brought them once more into closer contact, and the consideration which Mr. Chaplin showed on this occasion towards his former rival was largely dictated by compassion for the woman whom he had once loved. Indeed, the poor lady knew well how to play upon his feelings. In October of that year she writes to him in the semi-pious sentimental language of the period, pouring out her troubles to the "one real true friend" whom she knows she can trust.

I could not help crying over your letter, tears of joy at first, at the kindness of its tone, and then bitter, bitter tears of remorse at the thought of all I had caused you to suffer, and of the happiness that I now know was once so nearly in my grasp, and which I so recklessly threw away for a mere shadow. If what I am suffering now is a punishment for the way I treated you, it is indeed a hard one, and I feel at times it is more than I can bear. You don't know, you have no idea how miserable my life is, and for the future it will be nothing but one long regret. What shall I do? I assure you it is positively killing me and completely ruining whatever good there may have been in my nature. . . .

I have tried everything, reproaches, kindness, every thing I can think of, and at last utter indifference, which is an

¹ See p. 307.

awful thing to come to. Nothing does any good, and I feel and know the danger and temptation in which it places me. It is a hard cruel lot, and all I can do now is to pray to God to give me strength to bear it. I don't want to ask you to do anything the least painful to you, but I would give anything to see you once quietly and have a long talk with you. . . . Is it asking too much ?

Evidently it was not. Mr. Chaplin, knowing himself cured of his old infatuation, proved quite willing to renew the friendship. Entirely kindly and chivalrous and sincerely sorry for his former love, he was ready to give her every assurance of his sympathy. That she felt she could count upon him is evident from a letter she wrote him in the following November, six months after the Derby, when Lord Hastings' financial position was desperate, and his debt to Mr. Chaplin not yet paid in full.

I enclose you £48 which I think is what I owe you. But would you please look in your account and see, for I fancied it was more. I cannot quite make it out and have got rather muddled. You told me the other day that if you could ever help me in any way you would do it. So I am going to take you at your word and ask you to do me a very great favour, which, having already discussed Harry's affairs, I feel less scruple in writing about than I should otherwise have done.

The truth is I have had a most miserable letter from him this morning, acknowledging to me what of course I knew, which is that he is so frightfully hard up he does not know what to do or which way to turn ; and to add to all his other troubles he was served with a writ in Liverpool for £8000, and how to pay it he knows not. Therefore, seeing a letter this morning in your handwriting to him, and guessing it to be about money, I opened it, and I want you as the greatest kindness to me to let me destroy it and to allow the £1500 to stand over for the present, unless it is a real incon-

venience to you. And if it is, I can only say I will do my best to procure the money for you somehow or other at once. I am sure you will forgive me for asking you this favour. I would not have done so had I not been worried and bothered to death, and I do feel so unhappy about Harry. Please send me one line in answer.

Mr. Chaplin could scarcely do otherwise than accede to this request and, in addition, he won a small sum of money for the lady at Newmarket. The response was a further outburst of mingled gratitude and distress.

How too awfully kind of you. You don't know how really grateful I am to you, not only for your goodness about Harry, but also for having won me the money. You can have no idea how useful it has been to me. Thank you a thousand times. I shall never forget it.

I had a letter from our agent this morning, telling me that all the race-horses are to be sold at once, the Quorn Hounds to be given up at the end of the season, and we are to retrench in every possible way. God knows, there is no sacrifice I would not make if I could only get some sort of affection in return. How I dread going home and how I dread the winter! You can have no idea. I feel as if I should never have the strength to go through it. But I will do my duty . . . for I am awfully worried about his health. What a miserable life mine is! I am quite disheartened. . . . I am very glad you had such fun at the ball. I wish you had had ladies staying with you and had asked Lady Westmoreland and me. I was in hopes from your letter that you were coming to London, and that I should have caught a glimpse of you.

In June of the following year, some difference, the cause of which remains obscure, arose between Mr. Chaplin and Lord Hastings. Lady Hastings writes characteristically.

I was glad to be able to have that talk with you, and to hear the truth, for I have always had such a tremendously high opinion of you that I could not bear to think you had done anything to make me alter it. You know the position I am placed in, and that of course in the eyes of the world I am bound to stick to my husband. Therefore, I cannot go boldly about and say I believe *you* in preference to him, but I want to tell you that I do believe you implicitly, and I am quite satisfied with the explanation you gave me, as far as you yourself are concerned.

Lady Hastings was not, however, prepared to be wholly deprived of Mr. Chaplin's society. She spent the summer of 1868 with a woman friend at White Place near Maidenhead, whence she continued to write him letters full of the wretchedness of her life, and remorse, by this time needless, for the suffering she had caused him.

At first, when I was certainly happy, I don't think I viewed my conduct in the same light I do now (and to tell you the truth I did not think you really cared about me): but now when I am utterly miserable I see my behaviour to you, as I never seemed to see it before, and God knows how deep and bitter are my feelings of remorse. If I only could have seen the future then as I see it now, how differently I should have acted; how different both our lives would have been.

And so on in the exaggerated terms of a woman who is still trying to grasp after a happiness she has deliberately thrown away.

She writes again :

Is there any chance of your coming down to Temple again soon? If so, please let me know and I will go over there too. I should have gone over there last Sunday, but when I heard who the ladies were, I thought your time would be so fully occupied that you would not have a moment

to talk to me, so I kept away. . . . No one is going there next Sunday I know, but I should think the Sunday after a party might be arranged. God bless you.

Apparently Mr. Chaplin paid one or two visits to the neighbourhood and permitted himself a mild flirtation with a lady who was still young and pretty and who made so ardent an appeal to his compassion. We find her lamenting that on a certain evening he has a dinner engagement.

If you had come down, you would have dined with us, for I don't think any one would be a bit the wiser if you did, would they? Can't you manage to throw them over? Please do if you possibly can. I would not ask you, only I shan't see you again for such ages, and I should like to have one more evening like last Sunday at Temple.

Her release was, however, at hand. Lord Hastings' misfortunes had culminated in the defeat of his mare Lady Elizabeth in the Derby of 1868, and he died in the autumn of that year—a career of brilliant promise finishing in tragic disaster at the age of twenty-six. Mr. Chaplin had been careful to set a limit to his friendship with Lady Hastings, and he had no intention of falling a second time into her toils. In 1870 she married another racing friend, Sir George Chetwynd, and settled down to a comparatively happy domesticity.

In 1885, when Mr. Chaplin had been a widower for four years, we find her writing to him again with regard to her financial difficulties.

April 13.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPLIN—I was *so* pleased, and I might add surprised, to get your nice long letter, for I really began to think you had quite, *quite* forgotten me. I don't believe you *ever* intend coming here again. At the risk of your

wishing me up several chimneys, I am going to bother you again about trying to win me some money before the end of the summer. I shall be *so, so* grateful if you will, for I really am in a regular fix. When you couldn't win me any last year, I was obliged to borrow, and now I shall have to pay it back and have not the smallest idea how to do it. I have asked George over and over again to win me some, but he never does, and I dare not tell him why I want it, for naturally he would be frantic. But you have always been such a kind dear to me that I don't mind saying anything to you.

She goes on to give a pleasing picture of her home life.

I shall very likely take Guy to London on his way back to school at the end of the month. If I do, I will let you know and you must come and see me. The little house in Curzon Street is rather nice, but I honestly do not care about London and infinitely prefer my chicks and my chickens and my home pursuits. I daresay you would consider mine the dullest of dull lives, but I like it.

Her outlook on life changed with the years, but it is evident that Mr. Chaplin remained always in her mind as a friend who could be relied upon in the hour of need. Three years later, in 1888, we find her writing to him as a Cabinet Minister to solicit his interest on behalf of a favourite parson for a Crown living, but whether this request also was complied with is not recorded.

II

FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE (1862-1923)

I

ON his twenty-first birthday in December 1862, Harry Chaplin came into his heritage. In his old age he was fond of saying that on his uncle's death he had inherited properties in three different counties—which was in fact the case. In addition to the large estates of Blankney, Tathwell, and Metheringham, Temple Brewer and Little Caythorpe, and the smaller ones of Hallington, Hougham, Maltby, Raithby, and Scopwick, all in Lincolnshire, and covering about 25,000 acres, two small properties also came to him in Nottinghamshire and in Yorkshire, both of which were, however, sold shortly after his majority.

His grandfather, another Charles Chaplin of Blankney, had married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Robert Taylor of Newark on Trent and Pocklington, and it was through this lady that the land in Nottinghamshire had been brought into the family. The property in Yorkshire, part of the Manor of Snape, is of some historical interest. Snape originally belonged to the Nevills, and on the death of "John, last Lord of Latimer of the Nevills" in 1577, himself a son of John Nevill, Lord Latimer, and of



BLANKNEY HALL, LINCOLNSHIRE.

Catherine Parr, afterwards King Henry VIII.'s queen, it passed as her portion to his second daughter, Dorothy, who had married Thomas Cecil, first Earl of Exeter. When John Chaplin, nearly 200 years later, married Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of the 8th Earl of Exeter, the Snape property no doubt formed part of her dowry, perhaps as compensation on the birth of her brother for the loss of the Burleigh estate.

It was a great inheritance, though since his many acres were mainly devoted to the growing of wheat, it was not, even in those days, so substantial as it appeared. The young Squire's spirits, energy, and intelligence promised well for the handling of his property. But from his earliest days his ideas of living were on a generous scale, and demanded for their sustenance an increasing and not a diminishing fortune.

Both at Blankney and at the old house in Lincoln, he entertained in princely fashion, gathering about him his brothers, the young Ellices, his college friends, and those of his own London set. The large stables provided ample accommodation for their horses, to which he extended the same lavish hospitality. There are still old men who can remember the proud procession of the Squire of Blankney and his guests to the Lincoln races, the former driving his own four-in-hand, and the enthusiastic reception which awaited him on the course, only equalled by that accorded to Royalty. The late King Edward as Prince of Wales, was more than once his guest at the Burghersh Chantry for hunting, and on one occasion for the Grand National Hunters' race, for which the course lay just below the Lincoln Heath. The pace was certainly

fast, and racing, hunting, shooting, travel, society, and a full participation in all the pleasures which appealed to the young men of his circle, might well have occupied the whole of the young Squire's time. But Harry Chaplin, though he enjoyed life with that thoroughness which is only permitted to a splendid vitality, was, in spite of certain extravagances, fundamentally level headed. Early training, the virile influence of Lord Henry Bentinck and the honest love of sport, combined with a natural goodness of heart, and a dignity which underlay his genial good fellowship, preserved him from the more foolish excesses of some of his companions. Above all, he had from boyhood a strong inherited interest in his acres and the men who farmed them.

As a landlord he was immensely popular. Quite early in his political career he was to be known as the "Farmers' Friend", but his popularity with his tenants was due probably at least as much to a sympathetic personality as to the unceasing efforts which he made in his public life on their behalf. In his personal dealings with them he was inclined to be recklessly generous, but he could be sufficiently high-handed with any tenant who gave him trouble, and still more with any outsider who ventured to interfere with the privileges of his tenants. An acrimonious correspondence has been preserved with a neighbouring parson who coveted the garden of one of his flock, and it shows the Squire as a tenacious defender of his rights as a landlord. To insist upon his own way, to be immoderately indignant with anybody who tried to thwart him, and then not only entirely to forget his indignation when his object was achieved, but to

be genuinely surprised if the offender bore malice, was one of Harry Chaplin's chief characteristics throughout his life. To be greatly loved where one with a stricter sense of his obligations might have been merely appreciated was at once the strength and the weakness of his position.

His aunt, Louisa Chaplin, had married the Hon. and Rev. Sir Brook George Bridges,¹ who at this time held the living of St. Oswalds, Blankney. There is a tribute in a letter from an old woman once in their service as to the manner in which the young Squire performed his duties to his neighbours at this period.

It would be about the time when Hermit won the Derby. There was little else talked about at Blankney, only the Squire. I was kitchen maid at the Rectory with the Hon. B. G. Bridges, your father's uncle. He often dined there and we often heard Mrs. Bridges talk of him. On Sunday there was a special prayer offered for him for God to send him a comforter to help him to forget how cruelly he had been wronged by a woman. Mrs. Bridges used to say you see what a woman can do to ruin a man's life for greed of a title. He was a good man to all alike in the village—if any one was in trouble they would tell the Squire and his hand was in his pocket to help them. He was always spoken of as the poor Squire, not because of money ; he had everyone's heart, they felt for him being so cruelly wronged. He would take the drag out and take any one for a trip to take their thoughts off their work. He was always thinking of others ; to encourage the women he gave prizes for the cleanest house, he was the judge. When he was the least expected in he would go, it was said even the husband had to take his boots off before coming in in case there was a spot if the Squire came. He would have everything in time, no

¹ He was born in 1802, and was Rector of Blankney from 1853 to 1878, succeeding his brother Lord Fitzwalter as 6th Baronet in 1875, when the Barony of Fitzwalter became extinct.

hurry. It was a model village and a better landlord never lived. They could keep a cow if they wished on the land, would to-day they were more like him. England would be worth living in. One thing used to touch me, was the charcoal burners in the park, we have seen them in the night keeping watch. When fruit was sent to the Rectory the gardeners had orders not to forget the servants. He lived for the good he could do, he was loved by all whoever had anything to do for him. . . . I could say heaps more only space will not allow.

This artless testimony is of value as showing that, in the midst of his many distractions and at an age which is often thoughtless, he had the inborn kindness, the natural goodness of heart, which throughout his life prompted him without effort to think of other people's pleasures as well as of his own. To the Rectory kitchen and to the cottage women he was a hero, with a pleasing added element of sentimental romance. That his hand was always in his pocket, and not always judiciously, only endeared him the more to those who were ready to benefit.

II

For fourteen years after his accession to the estates Mr. Chaplin led a busy life of sport, society, and public service. It was not until 1876 that, at the age of thirty-five, he found the supreme though short-lived happiness of his life in his marriage with Lady Florence Leveson Gower, the elder daughter of the third Duke of Sutherland.

His mother's death had left him at a susceptible age without the restraining feminine influence which means so much to a man of his disposition, and which

would certainly have modified some of the extravagances of his youth. And now at thirty-five it seemed that his marriage with this radiant being who had aroused his sincere love as well as his passionate admiration, and whose character promised to be strong enough to steady what in him was erratic and impulsive, would give him that needed sense of responsibility, and the home life which since his boyhood he had missed. Young as she was, she had naturally been much in society, but her nature was fresh and unspoiled, and her high spirits made an especial appeal to Mr. Chaplin's own happy and buoyant disposition. That she shared his love of horses and of sport of all kinds, was probably not the least part of her charm. In his future wife, moreover, he was to find a companion of real intelligence, capable of taking a discerning interest in those public matters which absorbed so much of his own time and attention. Lady Florence, indeed, fulfilled his ideal of womanhood.

Moving in the same social circle, and being mutually attracted, they had probably seen much of one another both in Scotland and in London, and by the time Mr. Chaplin's first letter to her which has been preserved was written—during the season of 1876—friendship on his part had evidently ripened into a warmer sentiment. The letter suggests a more sentimental epoch than ours, when a woman's interest in public affairs, however much it was appreciated, was to be treated rather with playful tenderness than to be taken seriously.

DEAR LADY FLORENCE—Here is the pamphlet upon vivisection, that subject of such engrossing interest. I'm afraid

you will find it very dry reading, unless you are really qualifying for the Leadership of the Women's Suffrage Party and their rights. I have only looked through it hurriedly, but there is nothing to shock you, and it will introduce you to a Parliamentary Bill, than which I cannot conceive anything in this world less amusing. Your entertainment to-night by comparison will be liveliness itself, but I hope it will turn out better than you anticipate. We were lucky, I think, to ride when we did. I wonder when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again ! I hope it may be before long, and till then—Believe me, yours very truly,

HENRY CHAPLIN.

By the end of July, Lady Florence had promised to become his wife, and he had every reason to consider himself the happiest of men. His letters to her throughout their engagement give a good picture of his life at this time and, incidentally, not a little insight into both their characters. By her wish it was agreed that the engagement should not be announced until their friends had left London, but secrecy in so large and at the same time intimate a circle was not easy, and on his arrival at Goodwood Mr. Chaplin found that suspicions of the real truth had been already aroused, and not the least in the highest quarter.

At last, you dear One, I have a quiet moment, and I only wish it was to talk to you instead of writing, in that charming little summer-house for instance, where you underwent so many frights on Monday afternoon. Really, what with gardeners, carpenters, artists, and eminent people coming to say good-bye, there is no peace in this life, or little at all events for us that afternoon, and yet I never passed a happier hour in my life. And now I've only escaped with difficulty and no little chaff from the attractions of the smoking-room, to write one line to a certain little lady who



HENRY CHAPLIN (1st Viscount), 1850



LADY FLORENCE LEVESON GOWER
at the time of her marriage

is, I hope, sleeping soundly at this moment . . . and who will perhaps be pleased to get this when she wakes. Dearest, you do not know how much I think of you and how much more to-day. I have had to dissemble—officious people twice would insist upon congratulating me, but I repelled them with the greatest skill and the most complete discomfiture, though I do say so myself, and yet with perfect truth, putting it all to the fact that our horse was favourite and the winner of the Stewards' Cup.¹ And it is, I think, the perfect happiness which I feel and which you, Dear, have given me, that enables me to do so with a degree of composure which has puzzled all our friends and upset their calculations and their gossip, in a way which if you were here would make you die of laughter. I got here so late to-day that I've really hardly learnt at present who compose the party, but I sat next to Lady Westmoreland, a dear old friend, at dinner, and I was as little bored upon the whole, as I could expect to be without you. But I was discretion itself, and nothing could induce me, in spite of many flies skilfully thrown, to be drawn for a moment. There were between thirty and forty at dinner, mostly habitués for this week. . . . H.R.H., evidently fishing, was particular in his enquiries as to how far I had finished Blankney and volunteering to pay me a visit there whenever I am married, "which you know, my dear Harry, may happen to all of us sooner than we expect". Of course, I expressed my deep sense of the honour he proposed to do me under those most improbable circumstances, but that was all the change he got, and then I went away. And now, I think I must go to bed for it is between two and three, after writing I am afraid as much nonsense or more than you can read. Still, Dear, I could not sleep without a word to you, even though it be on paper only. Perhaps you'll laugh a little at me, perhaps you won't. I think myself that you will sympathise, not laugh, when I tell you once again how much I think of you and how much I love you.

¹ The Stewards Cup this year was won by Lord Hartington's chestnut colt Monaco—a four-year-old with 6 st. 7 lbs. The horse won by half a length in a field of 27 runners.

Two days later he writes on his last day at Goodwood :

I've just this moment got your letter, Dearest, brought to me in bed, while I was trying to wade through the very dullest "Blue Book" containing all the Turkish papers it ever was my misfortune to attempt to read. How pleasant the contrast, I needn't tell you. . . . I'm afraid you must be bored at Brighton, but so am I here—and anyway I hope that we shall meet to-morrow. . . . Lovely weather, the course as beautiful as ever, lots of friends at every turn, with good luck giving me a turn besides, and yet I never enjoyed Goodwood less, or was more bored, than I was the whole of yesterday, and it will be worse to-day. I must say, the racing was very bad, but anyway I would rather have been even at stupid Brighton a hundred times, although I've no doubt if I were saying instead of writing this you'd say—I don't believe it! But it is true nevertheless, and what's more, in your little Heart of Hearts, you know it too. Dear little Lady, I don't like being away and not seeing you even for two days now, and how on earth I am ever to harden my heart enough to go away to Homburg, I really do not know. . . . I had a chaffy and impudent little letter yesterday from my sister-in-law (Mrs. Cecil Chaplin), who somehow or other knows that we were at the Opera on Monday and so did Lady Bradford, too, though she was down here; and who from, do you think?—why that greatest of old gossips, the Prime Minister (Disraeli). It is quite touching, isn't it, the tender interest with which he watches my career? I had a letter from Ted yesterday, and it is quite clear to me that his marriage with Lady Gwen¹ will come off. She is a very nice little woman I think, and what a family party, please God if we live till then, next winter we shall be.

The Prince of Wales was admitted to the secret a very few days after his departure from Goodwood, and on August 2 we find him writing to Mr. Chaplin :

¹ Edward Chaplin married Lady Gwendolen Talbot, second daughter of the 19th Earl of Shrewsbury, January 18, 1877.

Let me offer you my most sincere congratulations on your engagement to one of the most charming young ladies whom I know and whom I have had the advantage of knowing ever since her childhood. I certainly did think you rather reticent at Goodwood when I hinted at the subject, as I had the Duke of Sutherland's permission to do so, but I now quite understand the reason, and you were, of course, undoubtedly right to follow the wishes of the young lady. Hoping that we may meet at Dunrobin in September, from
Yours most sincerely,

ALBERT EDWARD.

By the middle of August Mr. Chaplin was obliged to tear himself away from England. At thirty-five he found he was putting on weight, and a visit to Homburg was little short of a sacred duty. Leaving Lady Florence at Trentham on her way to Dunrobin, he spent some days at Blankney, making preliminary arrangements for the future and not least considering the question of hunters for his bride. Lady Florence at parting had presented him with her favourite dog, Dot, which along with his own, Vic, accompanied him to Germany and occupied a prominent place in his daily letters. He writes from Blankney :

Dot thought Vic exceedingly forward, and was wondering, too, all the time why you were not with us, till I explained to him that we weren't married yet and that we couldn't with propriety travel about till we were. He was satisfied then and looks forward with me to better days in the future. I never saw such a sensible dog in my life. I'm quite sure he knows all about it, and understands the position, and since I've told him I'm writing to you he has laid down perfectly still at my side. I gave him a capital dinner last night, not too rich, and he slept in my room like a top. He likes Blankney, and begs me to say with his love that he wishes you were here and thinks you will like it as well. . . . The garden didn't shew at all to advantage after the bright-

ness and beauty of Trentham, and then its chief attraction was wanting besides, a tall lanky girl, with no figure, as some people say, ah no ! no one can say with no figure, but whom I think the dearest, nicest, prettiest, cleverest, lovablest little woman I have ever had the good fortune to see in my life. . . . Ah ! by the way, I send you two letters, one from Stanley, the old Leamington vet. surgeon who has been my horse Commissioner for years, and the other from Cis.¹ . . . I don't like the idea of a horse being short for you, still Cis is a capital judge and never puts Emily on anything that is not quite A1. Bonnie Doon, the thoroughbred mare out of Queen Mary and sister - in - blood as they call it to Blink Bonny, who won both Derby and Oaks, is looking remarkably well. . . . Will you be a good child and do two things for me ? One is to weigh and send me your weight, and the other to send me as soon as you write a lock of your hair ! which you promised, you Dear One, you know, to give me at Trentham. I really can't wait any longer.

To both these requests the lady seems to have demurred, for in his next letter he says :

You dear One, I hope it isn't unlucky to cut your hair. I wouldn't have asked you if I had known it, but I cannot believe it, and Dot shakes his head when I ask him. You may send it to me with safety when you next write. Yes ! and I still want you to weigh, and why should you hate it ? If it wasn't that I know you are as light as a feather, I should really begin to think you were very heavy, but if the worst comes to the worst it will be only between you and me, and I'll promise faithfully never to divulge anything over 18 stone. There, darling, isn't that good, and you'll promise not to be angry with me for laughing a little ? . . . All the people about Blankney and at Lincoln have got hold of our engagement, and they are all so delighted and send you all sorts of kind messages already, and whatever you say there

¹ His brother Cecil married Emily, daughter of Hon. Robert Boyle, Lieut.-Colonel Coldstream Guards, January 1870.

is everything to love and to like in you even for outsiders, and if you don't win all their hearts very soon when they know you, I shan't ever give an opinion again.

Writing a few days later Mr. Chaplin tells the future mistress of Blankney the views of the household :

They all know here pretty well that there is a prospect at last of a mistress at Blankney, and they all seem delighted. Griffiths, the groom, in particular, a charming old servant, exceedingly anxious to know whether I shouldn't want some good London horses next year and if he mightn't look out for some steppers, with a look indescribably sly. You would have laughed, too, at my old agent, eighty-four, pulling a blackguard sporting paper, the *Sporting Times*, out of his pocket, which had been sent him from Lincoln, with the announcement in large letters of the latest gossip, that I was going to marry you. The paper was brought over to be a surprise to the housekeeper, but Charles¹ had let the cat out of the bag as soon as he got here, so the old man was sold. All this was elicited after a great deal of squeezing from an old lady here who is in much the same position as the charming old housekeeper at Trentham. She was in the service as nurse long before I was born. And I further discovered that Charles had acquainted them all that she was a very nice young lady indeed, and that all the people at Trentham doted upon her, so I hope it will be satisfactory to you, my dearest, to know what a capital character you have been given already. . . .

I saw all my foals for the first time late last night. There is a beautiful colt by Blair Athol, out of an own sister to Hermit, called Chanoinesse, that looks like winning the Derby.² The Derby reminds me of the rose-coloured jacket, and the jacket reminds me of a rose-coloured dress which I

¹ Charles Hammond, who is still alive, was Mr. Chaplin's valet, and afterwards butler. His master could do nothing without him, and Lady Florence used to call him "Nurse Hammond". He followed Mr. Chaplin's declining fortunes faithfully for many years, and was a tragic figure at the funeral.

² Chanoinesse was bred by Mr. Blenkirton in 1866. The colt in question was St. Andrew (*Stud Book*, vol. 14, p. 81).

am sending Mme. Elise to-morrow, so you must tell her what to do with it. I am sure it will suit you and you will look more captivating in it than ever. It is a lovely day here, and I can't help thinking how charming Dunrobin must be. How I wish I were with you, you dear one !

On his way through London, he writes :

A few people left in London. I saw Granville, the Duchess of Manchester, Lord Odo Russell, and Frank Westmoreland, all exceedingly kind and profuse in their congratulations. What do you think of dear Dizzy ?¹ They say that the speech he wound up with in reply to William Harcourt on the Bulgarian atrocities was in his very best form, and that he was greatly affected on leaving the House of Commons afterwards for the last time. Well, it has certainly been the scene of the great events of his life, his constant struggles and final triumphs; and I am not surprised. Nor do I believe he could have stood the work of it much longer. You ought to feel some little gratitude, for in spite of everything he has carried your Bill,² and it was read a third time last night, though with some amendments which perhaps you won't approve, but I am all for a judicious compromise at the right time if they do not go too far.

August 14.

I've had a great deal of talk about you to-day for I found an Uncle and Aunt of mine at my brother's, William and Lady Jane Ellice. He was one of my guardians, and she brought up my sister.³ They are the best and kindest

¹ On August 11, 1876, Disraeli made his last speech in the House of Commons in answer to an attack on the Government for their inaction over Bulgarian atrocities. It was unknown to all but one or two present that it was his final appearance as a member of the House. The news that the Queen had created him an Earl was announced next morning. Sir W. Harcourt's exquisite letter of congratulation will be found in Buckle's *Disraeli*, v. p. 498.

² Vivisection Bill for the due regulation of vivisection of animals for purposes of scientific experiment, passed August 1876.

³ Helen Matilda Chaplin married, 1866, William Pleydell Bouverie, Viscount Folkestone, afterwards 5th Earl of Radnor.

of people. I have more than affection for both of them, and I painted your picture in colours to them, which made them think, as I do, that I am one of the luckiest men in the world. Some day you'll make their acquaintance, I hope, and I am sure you will like them both.

Mr. Chaplin started for Homburg the following day, and his daily letters to Lady Florence give a lively description of his existence in what he felt, under the circumstances, to be a dreary exile.

HOMBURG, *August 16.*

I sent you a line from Brussels, but, ugh !!! the journey from there, never shall I forget it. I've been in India and have travelled from Delhi to Calcutta without stopping, but I think yesterday beat it. It was 90° in the shade yesterday. What it was in the train I don't know, but I should think 190. Dot and Vic panted and puffed with their mouths wide open the whole of the way, though I got them water and *ice* at every station. And as for me—well, I simply melted and groaned whenever I could. And the dust, the black dust which it was. I declare it got regularly into the skin, and I arrived like one of the niggers who sing comic songs—the Christy Minstrels at Epsom. I've been washing ever since, and I can't get clean. . . . I was late at the waters, you'd hardly believe it! and every one was gone home. They have a fashion, these people who come to Homburg, of getting up in the middle of the night to drink their waters, some of them beginning between 6 and 7 A.M. I like mine to be aired by the morning sun and to take them between nine and 10.

17th.—I feel as if I had been away from you 6 months at least, and the boredom of Homburg begins to be very depressing already. And yet there are a good many people here too. I went out for a prowl just to see who was here, and to order my dinner. Every one at Homburg dines at the Cursaal—like an enormous Café, where I must say, as a rule, it is very well done. . . . Having settled that important matter I took the dogs and myself out for a walk, which I

hope has done us a great deal of good. Vic was horribly sick, I believe, and all over the house. . . . In the evening I found a whole lot of friends after dinner hearing the band on the terrace, and among them your friend Terese Duchess of something [Colonna], but whose name I always forget. We renewed our acquaintance at once. She said that you were the *dearest, sweetest, nicest, kindest, best, and oldest* friend she'd got in the world. We became friends from that moment. She then further informed me that I was the luckiest man in the world, with which perhaps it will surprise you to hear that I agreed. . . . We ended with a good deal of chaff about Dot, whom she evidently does not regard with the same affectionate feelings that we do. Ah ! Lord—There he is growling again !! Never mind, we flatter ourselves, Dot and I, that we are perfectly able to hold our own against a dozen Tereses or a dozen any one else ; and he takes the waters with me the first time to-morrow. when I do trust he will be on his good behaviour with Rank and Fashion, for here, in these rooms, if I must tell the truth, he lives in a state of perpetual growl. One has to go through the form here of seeing the doctor before you begin taking the water, but yesterday, when he came here, Dot fairly frightened him out of the room, while I like a brute was bursting with laughter at seeing him bowing gracefully backwards out of the door—" You hev alway two dog in your room, eh ? " was his exclamation, " Then I will see you pleas in one ozer room," and so Dot remained complete master of the situation, and he won't have intrusive Germans in here at any price. On Saturday your friend the Duchess Terese proposes to organise a party for the Frankfurt races and has asked me to go with them, which I shall do, the party consisting besides of the Duchess of Cleveland and daughter, Lady Mary Primrose, the poor blind Grand Duke [of Baden], and some half-dozen others. This place is stagnation and dulness itself. Society chiefly consists at this moment at Homburg of *very* respectable English families . . . instead of the certainly mixed, but as I thought highly amusing collection, one used to meet here years ago.

18th.—I have just got your letter and with such a lovely long lock of brown hair. Thank you, you Dear one, a thousand times, over and over. You don't know what a pleasure it is to me to have got it, or how much it reminds me of Florrie. *I do know*, nobody better, how much I miss by not being now at Dunrobin, and I can fancy the sea and the view from your window, and the prettiest view of all as it would be to me, the little face looking out of it. Such a mixture, too, as it is ! Bright ! full of fun ! almost indeed impudent at one time, and then at another serious, thoughtful, and sometimes really quite sensible, but always loving and lovable. It is always to me in its varying phases nicer and dearer than the last. There Florrie, there's a nice sentence, and the odd thing is that I mean every word of it, and yet you had the assurance to tell me one day that I had no sentiment at all. . . . May I ask, Miss Lamb, what it was gave rise to Papa saying he wouldn't hear of our marriage before December ? It's all very well your saying you never asked for it even then, but are you quite sure that you didn't ask it should *not* be till then ? December indeed, 4 long months, with the honeymoon during a frost and 3 feet of snow on the ground, and you always say you are x in cold weather. Well ! that would be better than nothing, but I don't despair yet that you'll come round to my way of thinking and think of November as a most highly appropriate time. Dear Florrie, please be a good little girl and think this, and tell me you will next time you write, and then I'll —well, I hardly know what I will do, but anything short of promising faithfully to "Let me always do *everything* I like." . . . Three weeks is regulation for drinking the waters, but then I don't mean to be regulation. There's a good deal of good to be done in a fortnight, and by drinking one extra glass every morning and taking an extra long walk, I shall get my three weeks compressed very nearly into the inside of a fortnight.

19th.—To-morrow we go a party of eight to the races at Frankfurt. They are exceedingly chalk (I explained to you one day out riding what we mean by chalk) but they do to

pass the day, and then we dine at Frankfurt, which is only 9 miles from here and rather a pleasant drive home in the cool of the evening. Our host at Frankfurt is Herr Drexell, an hotel keeper and wine merchant, with the best Hock in the world, of which I laid in a stock the year Hermit won the Derby, and which to this day they are all very fond of at Blankney. Talking of dinner, I began by making what "Mr. Jorrocks" would have called a "forepaw", for I had hardly sat down at the table when I upset a bottle of claret all over the Duke of Cambridge, who was beautifully got up in a white waistcoat, smart light trousers, and altogether very effective. He was seated in a corner, too, with no chance of escaping, and I must say he took it exceedingly well. We retire, I can assure you, quite as early as you do—a quarter to 10 is the average time—and quite as sleepy. The waters have a most soporific effect, especially if you take a long walk as I do besides. The result of all this, I hope, will be that I shall ride a stone and a half lighter at least in the winter, and be able to keep my temper besides under all the difficult trials which you threaten me with.

21st.—Our expedition to Frankfurt was on the whole a success, excepting that José Little and I lost every bet that we made. I may as well confess my shortcomings at once, as that mischievous Duchess [Teresa Colonna], who never leaves me in peace for a moment, threatens to write to you about me every hour of my life, but you may be comforted, for it was with difficulty I could get on more than a fiver a time, and my losses amounted to £15 in all. We were a party of eight, and went in a conveyance chartered by the Duke, with four horses driven by a Homburg coachman, assisted by the "Ducal Courier"—that is to say, one held the whip, the other the reins, which you know, my dear Florrie, we should not consider to be at all orthodox anywhere else, I suppose, except here. How we got there and back safely I don't know till this moment, but such a turn-out altogether I'm sure you never saw in your life. How can I describe it? A large waggonette, fit to hold six, but crammed with eight people, luckily most of them small ones,

like me ! an awning composed of stuff which looked like dirty green and white curtains : a hump-backed courier and an unwashed-looking coachman, with a cockade in his hat, and whiskers so long that you could have tied them behind his neck, completed the most aristocratic turn-out that was to be seen on Frankfurt race-course. Then the races themselves were 3/4 of them what I should call nothing but "ramps"—a ramp, I must explain, means something very much like a robbery. I find they are quite as much if not more up to that kind of thing here as they are even in England, and consequently José and I, not being in the swim, lost our money upon each occasion.

The Duke and Duchess [of Colonna] go off to-morrow, greatly to my regret. I like her extremely. I'm sure she is exceedingly fond of you, and very agreeable and clever, and a great acquisition at such a dull place as this. She wants us very much to go to Rome in the winter, but I told her at once both for you and for me that I thought that was quite out of the question, unless there should be a *very long* frost indeed, for I don't suppose you'd care to go off to Italy in the middle of hunting or a good vein of sport a bit more than I should.

During his absence he was constantly occupied with the question of horses for his future wife. He writes :

It is odd you should mention weighing in your letter to-day, because I have been writing this morning 4 different letters to 4 different people about horses for you, and it does matter very much indeed before I come to Dunrobin, and I will tell you why. I hope to get answers and "horsey" letters from various quarters to meet me on my arrival in London. Now if there should be anything *very tempting* among them, I might very likely give up a day to go and see for myself. Among others, I've written to a very old friend and a very remarkable man, who has been Master of the Holderness Hounds in Yorkshire, and who for the last forty years, I should think, has had the largest and best stud

in that most sporting of all sporting counties, and has always done everything better than any one else ; in fact, his magnificence procured for him many years ago the soubriquet of "the Great Count". The Count was a man of no very particular birth or of any very good family, but a naturally clever, enterprising fellow, and he combined among many vocations the position of agent for 3 or 4 of the largest estates in the county, of being the largest farmer in Yorkshire, and of partner in certainly 2, and I believe 3, banks in the county, as well as being a Master of Hounds, all of which gave him great influence in the horse-breeding district of the East Riding. Added to this, he has a daughter oldish and terribly plain, but a capital sort and first-rate *rider*. She rides and makes all the best horses, and as he is almost worn out, poor old chap, by age, she knows more about them than he does, and *always tells me the truth*, which ill-natured people have said at times is not always the case with Papa. I have regularly dealt with him for years, or tried to deal with him, for he seldom had anything quite equal to me, though all the best Leicestershire horses formerly came out of his hands. And I thought if he had anything very choice at this moment, I could stop there a night on my way to Dunrobin, so you will now understand, my dear child, that it is of importance to me to know whether you are under or over 15 stone --no, I meant 14, for I do not suppose that you are more than that, although there's no knowing what time may do for you.

I'm now just like a schoolboy, counting every day to the holidays. They are all going next week, H.R.H. even on Wednesday, and as he and Fred Marshall are about my only society I cannot be left alone in my glory. You must have a nice letter to meet me in London, and to console me after the fatigue of the journey, and more especially as I am trying to harden my heart and come by a new way from Cologne by a place called Flushing, and where there are seven hours by sea. It would be nice training for the yacht, only I don't think even all my devotion will tempt me on board that vessel, nice as she may be ! The weather here has broken up—the heat much less and the fat people breathe

once again. But number me no more among them ! Homburg and absence from Florrie are giving daily, both to me and Dot, perfectly sylph-like figures.

27th.—I am sure if you will write one little line to my Aunt she will be delighted, and if you do, you must direct it to Lady Bridges, for her husband is now the Rev. Sir Brook, his elder brother having died some months ago, when he came into the property which is the cause of his leaving Blankney. They are an excellent old couple. . . . She was my father's sister and is a wonder, 83 years of age, and can walk 8 or 10 miles now and beat old Bridges' head off, who is, I should say, 10 years her junior.

I like to hear of your driving. When my brother Ted has taken you in hand and completed your education, you will end by becoming a first-rate whip. There is only one thing against it. The Lincolnshire roads are so abominable, that we get almost tired of having the team out. . . . I can't help laughing as I read your letters, and what embarrassing questions you put to me!!! Would I prefer to be here or to be rolling about with you on the yacht at Dunrobin ? Well, in the first place, I really can't contemplate any such proceeding as rolling about with you on the yacht, or anywhere else, and, secondly, I must ask you another—Would you prefer my society, horribly sick, by your side, or perfectly well a little farther off ? and your answer is mine !

For a *poor silly man*, I don't know that I could have got out of the dilemma much better, but I must say your opinion is not flattering to the sex as a rule. . . . I hope to be in London on Wednesday. My impatience of Homburg is fast getting past my control, and last night I was captured to take care of two ladies at dinner without any one else, and without the presence of mind to invent an excuse or to escape. I felt like a chicken that you see on the table trussed with two livers under its wings, as I sat between them, and I got into dreadful hot water, too, for having ordered the dinner in the most careless way, merely saying dinner for three, they gave us all kinds of expensive things, and I have hardly dared to shew myself since. They were not a good match, for

one was as small as the other was big, and I should think there was at least 11 stone between them. The former is the wife of a little man called Peter Crawshaw, the best gentleman jockey in England, who won many good steeple-chases for me when I kept chasers as well as race horses on the flat, and they are the tiniest little couple you ever saw.

There is an institution here called "Pine baths", which are said to be good for the health and which Lady —— took yesterday for the first time. Upon my expressing a hope that it was beneficent, I discovered that she took her bath with her hat on and nothing else. I roared. It was impossible to help it, for conceive the idea of 19 stone of female humanity in a hat and feathers and nothing else ! ! ! ! Dear, oh dear ! It does sound too ludicrous. Poor thing ; she'd never forgive me if she knew I'd written this, but it is only between you and me.

At last, on the day he left, he received Lady Florence's long-delayed weight.

Only 10 stone, well ! I thought it would have been 11 at the least, so with a 13 stone horse you will have just the right thing in hand—about a stone and a half. What a thing it is to be young and graceful ! You with your height, or what my friend at Frankfurt would call your "nice length", you ought to be a great deal more.

On his return from Homburg he went north at once and spent some happy weeks with Lady Florence at Dunrobin, and she was persuaded to her lover's views about the date of their wedding, which was fixed to take place at Trentham on November 15.

When Mr. Chaplin left Dunrobin in October, he made an expedition to Coignafearn to consider the possibilities of a site for the lodge in the deer forest which he was proposing to make. He writes on October 14 :

I have just come in after a soaking wet day, in which,

however, I have managed to see sufficiently to form an impression of what one side of the ground to the north of the Glen is like. The house at present is too rough for anything, but is situated in a glen with hills rising on either side of it and part of which is very wild and pretty. The ground from the Lodge, all along from the Glen to the Tops as far as one can see is charming, nice green hills with rocks and woods in places near the bottom. But when you get to the Tops, there are miles of flattish soft ground, acres and acres of heather and peat bogs over which at the best of times I hate walking, and I doubt very much whether it would ever be made a really nice place for you. The Findhorn River, which runs all along the Glen, and indeed rises in the hills of the ground, is now full of salmon, but they are rarely to be caught, although you may kill any number of trout. Undoubtedly, 4 or 5 miles of the glen in which the Lodge is situated is exceedingly wild and romantic, which would suit you exactly, but I have made up my mind so far as this, that I shall not be in a hurry about it.

On his way south he stopped at Beverley in Yorkshire to visit "the Count" (otherwise Mr. Hall) of whom he had written to Lady Florence from Homburg.

SCARBORO, BEVERLEY,
October 15th.

I wrote to you from Boat of Garten and again from York. I am enchanted to hear you are coming south so soon. . . . I stop here again to-night after hunting, entirely out of regard for my poor old friend. The poor old man is very much broken, and I am inclined to think that it is the last visit I shall ever pay him. I went through all the horses last night under the care of my friend, Miss Pop. I saw one, two, three, four animals which might do. The third and the one I have set my heart on, is a grey horse nearly white, with a head a good deal like an Arab, full of quality and looks just the sort, but Miss Hall says he is so hot she cannot ride him. Still, I mean to try him, and if he answers his looks and is not too violent I think I shall have him. I fancy

that you would ride almost anything on the quiet days in Lincolnshire where we have no fields at all. He is a nice size, a very clever shaped one, and a real game-looking horse. Old Hall says the same thing, that he pulls too much for any woman. Still, I have bought so many like that and found them all come quiet, that I am not in despair. . . . I enclose you a letter from Cis about Weyhill, and I've telegraphed to him that 13 stone is quite big enough.

October 16th. From 10.15 till 5.30 yesterday I was riding different horses, and five of them for you. Of your lot the grey is certainly all that he looks, and I have no doubt at all is a brilliant animal, but I am afraid he would tire you to death. I know he made me very hot for the half-hour I rode him, but I must say I am considerably bitten, a fine goer in all his paces, as bold as a lion, and feels as if he would jump over anything. I have not decided to buy him, but I have told Hall I'll write to him when I have seen others. I was riding him not with hounds, but after we came in from hunting. . . . I wish you had been out with us yesterday. We had quite a gallop, very nearly enough for me to blow my first horse, who carried me capitally, and you would have enjoyed it immensely, more especially as I should have piloted you in front of the whole of the Holderness Field for the first half of the gallop, and then you could have gone on by yourself.

A few days later he writes from Blankney :

I wish I were with you, you dear onc, to cheer you and put you in spirits, and it must seem empty and dull when you are the only ones left, but it is only now for a very short time, and I shall count the days till the 27th October. It is not quite certain, though, till I get to Newmarket, whether I can come to meet you. It is the last time I hope that I shall have any important Jockey Club business to deal with, but as the whole question has been mainly left in my hands from the beginning, now 12 months ago, and I am chiefly responsible for it, I must see it through. . . . I enclose a letter from Cis. I expect the horse any moment and I am

dying to see him. They say he is quite A1. My only fear now is that old Stanley's chaff will come true and that I shall be left on the right side, or rather the wrong side of the fence now and then. Ted has gone off to-day to join Lady Gwen at the Castlereaghs—that affair I consider as good as settled. All the hunters are looking well, and Bonnie Doon looks fit enough already to win the Liverpool. I have got all the other servants that I wanted, and everything now, I hope, will shortly be shipshape at Blankney and ready to receive its new mistress. I shall still have to bother you about your own rooms when we meet in London, but you won't mind that.

Thursday.—I have just come in from trying two of your horses—the black one that Stanley bought, and Weyhill, and I am sure you are anxious to hear all about them. The black horse after all is not what we call “the right sort”, and Weyhill is quite. A long low well-bred, game-looking Bay horse about 15·3, I should say, a capital head and neck, beautiful shoulders and charming to sit on, very good back and long thoroughbred quarters. He looks like business all over, and so he is, for the moment you get on his back, you can't fail to like him. A beautiful mouth and manners, and a perfect mover in his canter and gallop. I just popped him over a little bit of a hedge, and I should ride him at anything now without the least hesitation. With Bonnie Doon, Weyhill, and Sunbeam to begin with, we need not by any means despair now, and there are still the Newmarket, the Warwickshire, and the Gloucestershire horses for me to see. As for Bonnie Doon, if you don't take a great deal of beating on her, I am greatly mistaken. She has all the courage of her race, and though perfectly quiet, her temper is easily roused like some other well-bred little things that I sometimes have heard of. To-day while we were larking and after going beautifully with me, she refused one place with Harry Shepherd at least 8 or 10 times. But it was only the larking I think that upset her, for she got all right again afterwards. . . . I'm in a tremendous stew about your rooms here. I'm very much afraid that they will never be ready in time. I

am to see O'Connor on Monday, and perhaps we shall be able to arrange something at once. I do so want it all to be nice and comfortable for you as soon as you arrive, and the first thing I shall do when you get to London is to drag you off to see about it yourself. We shall have heaps of places to go to and things to see, and among others you'll have to come to look at Park Lane [his London house], though of course you'll find it looking horrid just now.

For various reasons, but chiefly because his thoughts were in quite another quarter, Mr. Chaplin did not greatly enjoy his visit to Newmarket at the end of October. The business of the Jockey Club, the reform of the rules for racing, prolonged itself in such a fashion as to make it impossible for him to fulfil his promise of meeting Lady Florence and the Duchess at Edinburgh. He writes with characteristic petulance :

NEWMARKET, *Tuesday*.—I *hate* racing, particularly at this moment [after a reference to the principal race,¹ he continues], . . . I'm bothered to death by these daily meetings, and if we don't get on faster than we have done to-day and yesterday, I shall never get away to meet you at Edinburgh. We have sat from 5 o'clock till 8 this evening—such a discussion, and never very tolerant of nonsense I've been in a perfect fever of impatience at the bosh that is talked by a great many members. Still, my dear child, I really must see it through. It is not a thing that I ought to throw over, or that you would wish me to. . . . You can't be more glad to see me again than I shall be to see you. It will be peace and quiet and happiness again after the racket and turmoil of this place. After all, the charm of Newmarket to me was excitement, and I have learnt now that there may be, and is,

¹ The race in question was the Cambridgeshire. Rosebery, a good-looking horse with fine shoulders and trained to perfection, won easily under 8 st. 5 lbs. including a stone penalty for winning the Casarewitch. He was ridden by Archer. The Cambridgeshire day was a very bad one for backers, and there were many gloomy faces in the special trains to London. Perhaps this may account for the tone of the letter.

happiness greater than excitement. . . . I won't tell you anything about the racing because I know you don't care about it. H.R.H. is going to ask you to dine at Marlborough House on Sunday next. He is in great spirits and chaffs me about being too lucky in other things to hope to win racing.

Wednesday.—I have never known more people at Newmarket than there are this week, but I do not enjoy the racing a bit. I have only two animals left, and I feel altogether out of the Hunt, which perhaps is quite the best thing that could happen and just as it should be, but two or three that I bred have won here, and although they no longer are mine, I am always pleased when young Hermits do well. Everybody is most kind in congratulating me upon my good fortune, and I shall have lots of presents. Fred Calthorpe is going to give me a watch. H.R.H. has got something which I am to be given at Marlborough House on Sunday next at 1.45 before lunch, and I will shew it to you at Stafford House immediately afterwards.

He returned to Blankney for a few days in November before his wedding to make sure that all was in order, and for a final trial of the new horses. He writes :

My new agent tells me that there have been several presents for us exhibited for the last few days in the shop windows at Lincoln from the tenants here and at Tathwell, from the tradesmen in Lincoln and from all the cottagers of the estate. Poor things, it is very nice of the latter out of their little earnings to think of it, and we must give them a good jollification in return. You don't know how excited and pleased people all are here about you. Coming home from hunting last night I called on the widow, Mrs. King, the wife of the old clergyman who kept race-horses. We had found a capital show of foxes in her coverts, so I went to tell her and to be civil. She was delighted, particularly when I said you would hope to make her acquaintance. Her mare Apology you saw run at Ascot this year and win the

Gold Cup. She shewed me the Cup with great pride, and announced her retirement from the Turf for the future, so I told her in that respect we were in the same boat. But she is a capital hunting friend, and so was the old man, and it will please the poor thing more than anything in the world if you are kind to her.

Finding the hounds were only 6 miles off this morning, I could not resist going out and riding the grey, Campaigner, that is his name, to covert. I larked him there the whole way over the Heath. *He will do.* I formed the highest opinion of him as a hunter, and he is a real bold horse, but at the same time, as far as I could judge to-day, as pleasant as possible, and one that *you*, I feel sure, could ride with a pack thread; a very fine jumper, as quick and clever as possible. I should feel happy about you while you were on him, and his honour, I am sure, may be trusted implicitly.

His last letter to his bride a few days before their wedding has a pathetic interest in view of the few years of marriage which were before them.

October 11.—Ted has gone to Lincoln to make a speech to his constituents to-night. His marriage is settled, and announced to Lady Gwendoline, and I've had a letter from Shrewsbury acquainting me with that fact. It may be some consolation and perhaps relief to you to know that they have a "Royal Party" at Ingestre and can't come to Trentham next week, but he sends every sort of kind message to you. . . . I am nervous, not *about the ceremony*!! Now didn't you hope I was going to be? but about your rooms being done by the time they ought to be, but the paper you chose is up and they will look very nice, I feel sure. Darling little woman, do not fret or fidget about the awful ceremony. I often tell you that it has no effect of that sort upon me, and I will tell you why. Because I am as firmly convinced as I can be of anything that the step we are about to take with God's blessing will be, and ought to be, except through our own faults, for our mutual and enduring happiness both here and hereafter. Think of it in this light, and then the

momentary passing agitation of a ceremony will not trouble you, and remember, child, that it is to you and your good influence that I look to help us in the cares, may be in the trials and temptations and, please God, the happiness which awaits us in the future.

III

From his letters to his wife which have survived, it is clear that in his married life Mr. Chaplin found the complete sum of happiness. Lady Florence's letters, too sacred for other eyes, were destroyed by her husband after her death, but his own are full of his intense joy and pride in her charm and judgment, and delight in her companionship, touched sometimes by a playful tenderness towards her youth. Much of their happiness naturally sprang from the many tastes and pleasures which they shared in common. Lady Florence's love of horses and hunting was scarcely less than his own, but it was left to her husband to initiate her into the science of deer stalking, and together they discussed the forest which he proposed to make out of a tract of the Duke's vast property in Sutherland. Each had an intense hereditary love of Scotland, and to their autumn holiday in the north they looked forward with the same happy eagerness.

They both enjoyed society, which made many claims upon them in London, and also in the country houses of those more spacious days; while at Blankney they received their more intimate friends and for a time entertained in a scarcely less princely fashion than in Mr. Chaplin's bachelor days. Occupied as she was with society, her home, and, later, her children,

to whose welfare she gave devoted attention, Lady Florence yet found time for her duties to her poorer neighbours both in Mayfair and at Blankney, where she became greatly beloved. But there was one taste of her husband's which she could not share. She never professed to take an interest in horse-racing, and it was partly out of deference to her wishes that his racing stable at the time of his marriage was greatly reduced. Reluctant to interfere with his pleasures, Lady Florence must have sometimes felt that larger sums of money were apt to change hands on a race-course than was altogether desirable. An apologetic note may often be observed in the Squire's letters from the various race meetings which he attended alone, and which to the end of his life provided him with an interest he could never forgo.

There was certainly a growing need for some curtailment of Mr. Chaplin's lavish expenditure. His large rent roll, derived, as much of it was, from many thousand acres of wheat-growing land, was deceptive. With increasing foreign competition and a series of bad harvests, it was steadily diminishing, a fact of which no one was more acutely aware than the Squire, as a politician, and which nobody, from a personal and practical point of view, was less disposed to face. Had his wife lived, it is probable that her influence would have prevailed to save at least some portion of his inheritance from the dangers which already threatened it. Certainly, if only for her sake, a more serious effort would have been made to retrench. As it was, she was at least spared the pain of seeing their home pass from her children.

The years of his married life were also years of

political anxiety for Mr. Chaplin. The champion, as he already felt himself to be, of the agricultural interests of England, his hands were full in urging in Parliament the claims of the English land upon a pre-occupied Government. For they were years also of great unrest in Europe, and as a devoted adherent of Lord Beaconsfield it was incumbent upon Mr. Chaplin to be constantly present in the House to support his leader through the fierce storm of criticism with which he was assailed for his foreign policy by Mr. Gladstone and the Opposition. The Russo-Turkish War in 1877 was a subject of bitter controversy both in and out of Parliament, and this was followed in 1879 by England's campaign in Zululand, as well as a war with the Ameer of Afghanistan.

Owing to his superb vitality of mind and body Mr. Chaplin was usually able to do most of the things that he wanted to do, and he was no less active in his duties as Master of the Blankney Hunt than he was assiduous in his Parliamentary attendance during the session. The winter following his marriage (which took place at Trentham on November 15), when not detained in London by the claims of society or politics, was spent by the young couple mostly at Blankney, testing the merits of the new hunters. The stable, however, was not complete. There were still carriage horses to be chosen for London work as well as for the country. The Squire writes in February from the House of Commons, whither he had gone to attend a debate on the Eastern question, and regrets that he has missed the opportunity "to give the Arch Demon (Mr. Gladstone) another turn". Incidentally, he has attended a sale at Tattersalls.

"The ponies are yours and Steward will match either one or both in colour whenever he can. I drove them again on different sides, and they are A1. There is nothing like them that I have seen in London myself. We got the mare, a very fine goer, but not up to the ponies, who are superb. The chestnuts are both very raw, and will want a great deal of pulling into shape, but they are a rare pair and can go a real good pace as well as step." In his later years, watching the incessant stream of motors¹ hurrying through the Park, the Squire must have sighed sometimes for the more leisurely days of high-stepping chestnuts and superb ponies chosen with such care for a beloved woman.

There were several brief separations during the first year of their married life. Mr. Chaplin attended most of his race meetings alone, and on these occasions he wrote to Lady Florence at least once a day. In March he went down to Blankney to entertain his usual bachelor house-party for the Lincoln meeting, while his wife was at Trentham. It was his first visit to Blankney without her since their marriage, and it is evident that he found the big house dreary, for his usual light-heartedness somewhat forsook him, although he was entertaining in the same lavish manner as in the past.

Sunday.—We arrived here all right last night. Bill [his brother-in-law, the Earl of Radnor²], old Rous [Admiral Rous]

¹ Mr. Chaplin detested motors, but, ironically enough, it was under his aegis at the Local Government Board that the Act was passed which permitted motor vehicles to proceed without a red flag in front of them.

² Then Lord Folkestone. He was Treasurer of the Household, 1885–1886, and from 1886 to 1892. In this capacity he was a Government Whip, using his leisure moments with his pencil upon the most admirable portraits and

and myself. It was very odd and very lonely without you in that large room by myself, but I packed Vic up at the foot of the bed and soon went to sleep—very tired myself, for I played billiards with the Admiral till one o/c., beating him like fun. To-day Bill and I have both been to church, in the morning, too. Isn't that good of me? Frank Westmoreland has just this minute turned up, having arrived with 40 horses from Newmarket in a special train to Lincoln. Mrs. Dodds [the housekeeper] had packed up your sitting-room as well as the dressing-room, but I made her undo them, because it is somewhere for me to go to be quiet, and it feels more as if you were there or not so very far off, you little sweet thing, and I wonder how you are getting on! We've been round the Paddocks since church with Turk and Vic. Turk is fatter than ever and I think clumsier, and as soon as the post is gone, we get to the kennels, and then I suppose more guests will arrive.

Monday.—Horses all very well. Caro [her hunter] much admired by every one, a great wonder that so small a Poppet can ride him. I tell fine tales about the way she goes on him, *after* me, of course. I expect about 8 more guests tonight, and what with leaving it first to her and then at the last moment changing all the rooms, Mrs. Dodds is verging on distraction.

Tuesday.—I've had to go round the Paddocks this morning before breakfast. The critics who really know, like Machell and "the Lad", that is, Colonel Forester, think the yearlings first-class, and indeed that is what they are. There are two enclosures which you may study. The first with 3 black underlines means that I must be in the H. of C. tomorrow if Mr. Fawcett perseveres.¹ If he doesn't, I dare say there is some train by which I could come to Trentham in

caricatures of Parliamentary figures in the House and in the Lobby. He was M.P. for S. Wilts, 1874–1885, and for Middlesex from 1885 until 1889, when he succeeded to the Earldom of Radnor.

¹ Debate on Mr. Fawcett's Resolution that Turkish promises without guarantees are useless. The Conference between the Great Powers at Constantinople in the previous December had failed. War was declared by Russia against Turkey in April.

the evening after the House has met, and we have learnt for certain if he goes on. Members sometimes withdraw at the last moment, but he is a peculiarly obstinate and wrong-headed man. The second is from Anderson, shewing a new plan of what could be done with our house [41 Park Lane], and it certainly looks well worth considering, though I have had no time to examine it. Will you bring your masculine mind and intelligence to bear on the question, and be prepared to give me your opinion? Freddie Johnstone just got done for the big race by a neck by Lord Wilton's mare. Rosebery's great favourite was bowled over as they generally are, and nearly everybody in the house, including your devoted, won, which is always satisfactory.¹ The teams went well and Ted drove too beautifully.

A week or so later, after a joint visit to the Radnors at Coleshill, Mr. Chaplin joined Lord Spencer's party at Harleston for a few days' hunting and racing, while Lady Florence remained in London. His pride and delight in his young wife's horsemanship was an ever welcome topic of conversation in the circles which he frequented.

HARLESTON, NORTHAMPTON, April 8.—I got down all right by the 9 o/c. train and to the meet by 12 o/c. As my hunting things hadn't come I was nervous about the horses, but there I found Alfonso and the Miller, Alfonso fresh to a degree. We found almost immediately, and really for 15 or 20 minutes had quite a good burst, in which I was delighted to see Champion, the dog I have lent Spencer, and whom we think nearly worn out, leading the Pack almost the whole of the way. Alfonso carried me very well, and we were very select—Spencer, one whip, a Mr. Forster, who is superbly mounted and used to ride very hard in Leicestershire, and

¹ Mr. Chaplin refers to the Lincoln Handicap. The favourite was Lord Rosebery's Touchet which ran unplaced. The race was won by Lord Wilton's Footstep, a four-year-old with 7 st. 2 lbs.; Sir F. Johnstone's Poursuivant, a five-year-old with 7 st. 18 lbs., being second. Poursuivant was second favourite at 8 to 1.

your Beloved. It only wanted you to make me quite happy. Bay Middleton, the Granvilles, Lady A., Admiral Rous, G. Payne, Henry Savile, and to-morrow, I believe, "the Lad", Henry Forester, that is, make up our party. Such a nice bright little house this, and I do wish you were here. . . . To-morrow morning at 7.30 we are to have a Bye Day on the sly before the races. But no one knows it. It is thought that two of the wives of the sportsmen, being under the impression that their husbands are killing themselves, might object. I ventured to say that I knew one wife who wouldn't at all events. They are all so sorry you are not here, but unless you were able to be out hunting with us, I don't think you would enjoy it as much as I do. The racing for to-day will interest me and it would have you. Every one talks of your riding and performances out hunting in Lincolnshire, and if all goes well we must come here together next season just to shew them what you can do in this country. Lady Sarah Spencer asked me at dinner if you had quite recovered from your fall, and Bay Middleton thinks Lady Florence Chaplin must show the Lincolnshire ladies the way. I told him Yes! and the gentlemen too, all except me! Ahem!

April 4.—I have been lucky to-day. Providence, I think, means to reward me for my virtue in giving up the Turf, or it would be more accurate to say my horses. My big horse won in a canter,¹ another in the stable of Cav's [Lord Hartington] did the same, and I backed the winner of the big race as well from my own immaculate judgement. I think I must have had for me a very good day and won nearly £3000.

Mr. Chaplin went by himself to Goodwood this year at the close of a rather strenuous session. While there the news came of an obstructive agitation in the House on July 20 by the Irish members under the leadership of Parnell for the release of the Fenian convicts. Lady

¹ Mr. Chaplin's winning horse was Strike, appropriately named, as he was by the Miner. He started second favourite at 9 to 2. Lord Hartington's success was gained in the Wakefield Lawn Stakes by Ethelred.

Florence had gone on to Blankney accompanied by her great friend, Lady Edith Ashley (daughter of the Earl of Shaftesbury, the philanthropist), who was responsible for her original interest in the Vivisection Bill.

GOODWOOD, CHICHESTER, Aug. 1.—I am so glad you got through the journey all right and are none the worse. I quite wish I were there [at Blankney] to see the flowers *and* my Poppet! I didn't come down to dinner last night. What with the heat, and not being quite well I thought it better to take things easy and give myself a good rest. There is really nothing serious the matter. I have been so good that I have stayed here quietly to-day, instead of going to the races, on purpose to be fit when I come down to you, and I have just sent for some sandwiches and sherry for lunch, which may reassure you. I am in some hopes of selling my three Hermit fillies after all ; the same man who bid me £3000 for them is after them again. I have asked him £4000, which "my duty to my wife and family" would not allow me to refuse, and if he has a good week I think he will take them. That will reduce my stud again to the dimensions that I don't mind, 3 animals in training.

We got the news early by telegraph, that the House of Commons was still sitting at 8 o/c. this morning. The Government, it appears, and the leader of the Opposition determined to tire out these Irish *Ultra Blackguards*, supported though they were by Mr. Courtney and Professor Fawcett, and we are still waiting to hear the result. Arrangements, it seems, were made for relays of members, policemen, and officials, and I only hope and trust they have stuck to it, so as to wear them out. It will end in the chief Blackguard "Parnell", going into a mad-house, I feel convinced, and the sooner the better. I gave the Duchess your note. She was very kind and nice about you, and hoped you would come here next year. I am dying to hear all about the horses and things at Blankney ; how they are : if Sunbeam's appearance pleases you and what Lady Edith Ashley thinks of it all. I should like to call her Edith, and I think I should

if I were there. Cav's mare got beat for the race for which she has been favourite for so long a time, and of course we have all lost our money in consequence.

Their eldest child, Eric, the present Viscount Chaplin, was born in London in September, and in October the Squire once or twice attended the Newmarket meetings. He writes from Newmarket on October 22 :

It has been such a lovely day here that I quite wished you were with me and out in your carriage on the heath. A few days here would put you on your feet I am sure. Some day you shall come just to see what it is like and if you like it. I have asked 4 or 6 men who regularly go to Lincoln to make use of Blankney if they go, and Frank Westmoreland to do Host and take care of them if I am not there, and very soon after that if it keeps fine like it has been to-day, I hope we shall be able to get there ourselves. . . . I can't sell my fillies. Everybody says they are beautiful, but nobody seems to have any money. I hope you have been well all day and the little one too. How funny it seems to be writing and asking about our child !

Oct. 23.—I am longing to hear of you to-morrow and to know how you are getting on. If you look in the paper to-morrow you will see Cav's mare, Belphebe, one that I bred, in a field of nearly 40 horses got 2nd. It is the greatest race, in some respects, of the year, and after looking like winning easy, poor little mare, she was just beat at the finish by a French horse, who has recently come over from France expressly to run for this race.¹ I had to back her, of course, and consequently am a loser to-day of some hundreds, but nothing serious. I am very fond of the little mare, and have

¹ This passage refers to the Cambridgeshire. The race was won by Prince D'Arenberg's Jongleur, a three-year-old carrying 8 st. 4 lbs. Lord Hartington's Belphebe was second with 7 st. 10 lbs. Belphebe by Toxophilite—Vaga—had earlier in the season won the One Thousand. She was the only classic winner the Duke of Devonshire ever owned. Her dam was own sister to Stray Shot, who, mated with Hermit, bred the Derby winner of 1882.—Shotover. See *post*, p. 329.

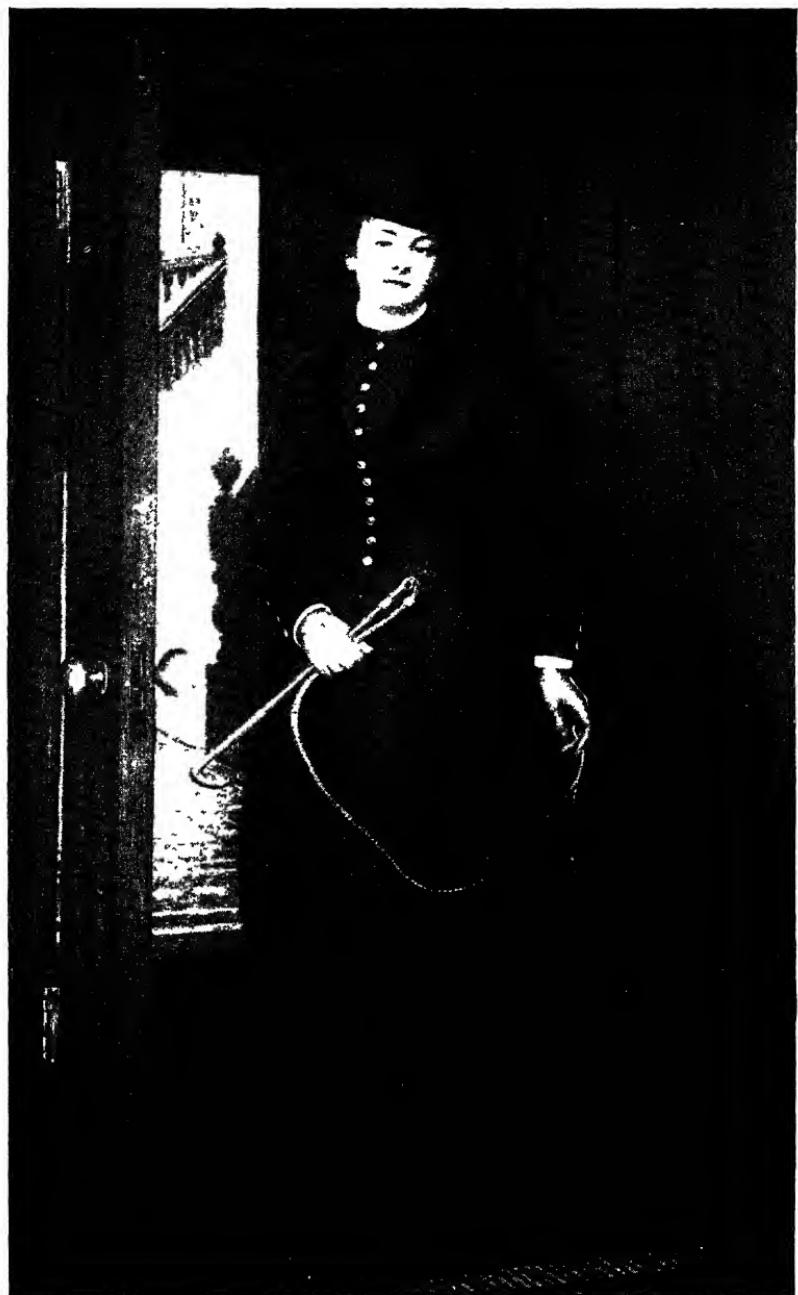
given her a large and fat carrot since to make up for the disappointment.

I shall be glad to get back again to my child to-morrow. You'll laugh at me very likely and say, "Why do you go, then?" but it is true nevertheless that Newmarket sometimes grates on me now in a way it never did formerly, not because I've lost, for that is a trifle after all, but it makes me think more and more how very different now my life might have been at this moment if it had not been for you, bless you. We'll have a little dinner to-morrow, and you are to order it. To-morrow I have probably got to run the mare of my own who disappointed me so much at Goodwood.¹ She has grown into a splendid animal, and whatever else she does will make a great addition to Hermit's Harem. H.R.H. is here and asked much after you.

In the winter of 1877 Lady Florence was hunting once more with her husband's hounds, and whenever the Squire could escape from the claims of his Parliamentary work, they were constantly together in the field. In February he writes from London to his wife, who was on a visit in Dorsetshire, regarding hunting fixtures.

There, darling, read the enclosed and admit that this neglectful stupid old frump sometimes does manage to arrange what his pretty, wilful, naughty, silly young child of a wife wants! I have replied that if Lady Castlereagh (the late Lady Londonderry) will let you hear by Tuesday at Stafford House you will write, and that probably either next week or the following would suit us. That will lead, I dare say, to the chance of more of Leicestershire if you like it. I am rather inclined myself to think that next Saturday at Wellingore, the following Wednesday over the water, and then to Heythorpe would be best, but we can talk that

¹ A chestnut two-year-old filly, by Knowsley—Bab at the Bowster. For the Richmond Stakes at Goodwood she had been much fancied, but was beaten by the famous Jannette. She was now beaten again in the Criterion Nursery.



LADY FLORENCE CHAPLIN

over. Lonsdale, I am sure, would make his Cottesmore Meet to suit us at any time. I am dying to hear all about you and how you enjoyed yourself and *looked* and everything. I hope and I think I shall make a good speech¹ and you, I believe, will appreciate my sentiments.

Their eldest daughter, Edith (the present Marchioness of Londonderry), was born at Blankney in December 1878. In the following spring, the country was profoundly depressed by the war news from Zululand, the disaster of Isandhlwana on January 22. There was a popular demand by the Opposition for the recall both of Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner in South Africa, and of Lord Chelmsford, the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Beaconsfield persuaded his Ministers to be content with a rebuke to Sir Bartle, of whose capacities he had a great opinion. The Ministers had a majority of 95 in the Lords, but were only supported in the Commons by a majority of 60. It was finally decided to send out Sir Garnet Wolseley to be High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief for Natal, Transvaal, and territories adjacent, including Zululand, Sir Bartle Frere being restricted to Cape Colony and the territory adjacent, and Lord Chelmsford to become second in command.

The Squire, preoccupied with politics, paid only a flying visit to Blankney in March for the Lincoln races. Lady Florence had left the children at Blankney, and Mr. Chaplin was not on this occasion entertaining in his usual princely fashion. He writes :

I came down this morning by the 8.30 train with Rosebery, who had come up to vote in the Division in the Lords. He

¹ Mr. Chaplin made an urgent protest in the House against the possible occupation of Constantinople by Russia.

had a saloon, so we came in state, and I am £5 or £600 richer for the journey. He told me he thought his horse was sure to win, and he did after a very fine race.¹ The stand at Lincoln was so crowded that I could not write from there and it was wretchedly cold and miserable. I had no interest in anything, and came away the moment the big race was over.

They do not report my speech² at all in any of the papers except the *Times*, though in all the leading articles I see they refer to it, and I was told by a good many people it was very effective, and by some that it was the best I had ever made. I don't think that myself, but I was fairly satisfied when I sat down. With you, I should very much like to say a word for Sir Bartle, but it must be on Monday if I do, and if possible, child, I will be with you on Monday out hunting. I have ordered the horses to go to the Meet and be ready. In the nursery I found Teppy [his old nurse] on her knees in an attitude as if she was praying, but she was really playing with Eric and spoiling him too, I dare say. Anyway, the brat positively shrieked with delight when I pretended to chuck him up to the ceiling. I never saw him so pleased or heard him laugh so loud before. The little one was in her cot, enjoying heartily her 6th bottle. She was too busy to speak or even to grunt, but winked pleasantly at me.

After the session of 1879, when the Royal Commission on Agriculture was appointed, Mr. Chaplin remained in London for the preliminary meetings of the Commission, sending his wife and children to Trentham. Before he could follow her, he was obliged to pay a visit to Blankney and to inspect the state of his farms—a depressing expedition, especially without the companionship and help of Lady Florence. There was some idea that she should join him there, but it was found necessary for her to go north in advance to

¹ Lord Rosebery's Touchet—a five-year-old carrying 8 st. 4 lbs. There were 27 runners.

² On the causes of agricultural depression.

make the arrangements at Kinloch, four miles from Tongue on the north coast of Sutherland, where they were proposing to spend the autumn. She had gone off in low spirits, reluctant to leave him in the dull stuffy atmosphere of London in August.

He writes :

The Commission sits again on Friday, and of course it is impossible to say if it will get through its work that day, but I think there is a fair chance. In that case, of course, I shall go off to Blankney instantly, for it is too beastly here—hot as something, dusty, muggy and dull to a degree. Last night I dined at the Carlton at 9 o/c. by myself, and in a very grumpy humour. I had a good young grouse which was something, and I dare say you didn't! Dear little wife, I am too sorry to bother you with uncertainty of plans, but I really cannot help it, and you will find if you look just below the surface that in most cases where you hear people say the Commission will do no good, the wish is father to the thought. Believe me, child, it will. It must do good, and cannot fail to do so in many ways that the general public do not in the least at present understand, even if it may not be able to provide a ready and immediate cure for the depression. I do not say this, as you know, without having given to the subject the most deep and anxious thought and consideration, which is not the case with the majority of our critics. But I did not sit down to write my child a speech or a lecture, but to try to say something to cheer or to brighten her loving little heart. I have had such a nice happy and grateful letter from Stephens [the new Rector of Blankney] chiefly prompted, I think, by your telling Mrs. Dodds to supply him from the dairy. I shall be *quite contented* with whatever you decide to-day, but it would be very nice if you should have decided to come to Blankney instead of going straight North. You see, for estate and farm reasons I must have 3 or 4 days at Blankney, for the purpose of seeing some farms and farmers who are on the verge of giving up, before October, which is the time they give me notice to quit. When it comes to so

serious a question as farms being given up, it is a matter on which I must decide things for myself, and on which Burton [the agent] can hardly act for me. Besides which I could keep them when he couldn't. Then we had such a short time at Blankney before that there are lots of things that it would be nice for both of us to see a little more of, so that if you should have decided to come you will have something to amuse you. At the same time, little woman, bear in mind that I shall be best *pleased* if I think you have done whatever you like best yourself.

The next day he is able to reassure her that the newly-formed Commission will not sit again that session—"So my little wife's great bugbear, 'the utter destruction of the winter', is, I hope, satisfactorily disposed of. I shall miss you very much to-morrow, but I shall have a great deal to do. A general overhauling of accounts and expenses of estate and establishment with a view of arriving at a sound financial basis, and I should have been but a dull companion, and being there alone I shall hurry after you the sooner."

Blankney he found very depressing. "More rain here, torrents yesterday, and more threatened with the glass falling to-day. Oh dear ! Oh dear ! I dread going round the farms, but I'm sure it is better to do it. Things keep cropping up. An opposition has been started to Ted in Lincoln, Mr. Hinde Palmer, a lawyer. We beat him before, but within the last two days he has issued an address and as Ted is away this must be looked after."

Two days later he writes :

I was out with Howard 7½ hours yesterday, and went over, I think, every Heath Farm but two, and to-day I left the house at 9 o/c. to go to a meeting at Boston, where I

hope we have inaugurated a new scheme to prevent the Fen people from being drowned. On the Heath, with 2 or 3 exceptions, the crops look well—some one or two of them very well, and Howard's in particular quite first rate. I must say his Heath Farm is an example to the whole country, but everything, poor fellow, now depends upon the weather. He has spent no end of money on it. His crops, one wheat field in particular, are *extraordinary*, and if we have 3 weeks' fine weather and sun now, he will have a great return ; but alas ! It rained hard all last night and the greater part of to-day, and if it goes on like this for 3 or 4 days, everything must mildew, and it will mean almost ruin for them all. I must say, it is too hard on those who, in spite of bad times, and all their previous hopes, have been doing their very best all the same. The whole house, place, and country is as damp as it can be. I expect I shall have a fit of rheumatism, and am obliged to have fires in all the rooms to keep them decently dry.

But for the Squire there was balm in Gilead : “Turco and that chestnut mare are the best carriage horses I've ever had. I went into Sleaford to-day, certainly in 50 minutes, never out of a trot for a moment, and they could have gone ever so much faster if wanted. Good-bye for the present, and when you have a spare moment write me a little more. I so look forward to your letters and long to be with you. Kiss the little ones.”

It was a pleasure in the midst of the prevailing depression to be able to write and tell his wife of the success of a new shoe which she had urged him to try for the horses. “I have been out and all round the paddocks and the stud before breakfast, and the chief part of the morning I have devoted to the subject of the new shoe. The result is that all my young stock, half-bred and thoroughbred, are to be

shod in this way from this day forth, and such other of my old horses as I think will stand it. It is all your doing, child, really. I should not have done it without you, and for a young woman who says she never *influences* her husband, I think it is pretty well. I regard it as a great stable reform. I had Sunbeam run out with her new shoes and she ran as sound and as fresh as possible."

The Squire also had to give his support to his new Rector, the Rev. J. O. (afterwards Canon) Stephens,¹ who had succeeded his uncle, Sir Brook Bridges, at St. Oswald's Church, Blankney. It was in this year that the church was being enlarged and to some extent restored, a matter in which both the Squire and his wife took a very active interest. The large community of men and boys attached to the Blankney stables and stud farms were no doubt an added care to the Rector. The Squire writes : " Stephens has asked me to attend a sort of meeting at which he proposes to collect as many of the young men about the stables, etc., as he can, and to give them an address by way of trying to get them all to attend church better than has hitherto been the case. I told him I would do anything I could to help him. I suppose I am right. The schools, etc., will wait until he can see you about them in the Autumn."

The result of these efforts was apparently disappointing, for he writes the following Sunday :

I've been to Church, I may say at once, and the place crammed—people both from Metheringham and Scopwick as well as Blankney there. I wish so much, my child, you were

¹ The late Canon Stephens lived to be over ninety. He was a famous art connoisseur, and the Rector and Doctor (Colonel Brook) and the Squire make up a trio of the old school, like three figures in Trollope.

here with me now, because you could help Stephens so much more than I can, but I am trying to do all I can and give him a fair start, and there is a good opportunity now. On his way home from dinner last night, and notwithstanding the meeting yesterday, 4 men were coming along roaring drunk and kicking up a row. They must have belonged to the stables, because they could be going home nowhere else, and before night, by hook or by crook, *I will find out* who they were and make an example. I must say it is rather disheartening.

Thank God! the weather has changed, and we had a lovely fine day yesterday and so far to-day. It puts us all into better spirits.

His tour of the low-lying farms was none the less depressing.

Farm after farm, field after field that ought to be a crop of wheat or of barley, literally destroyed by the wet. There will be nothing, and poor Howard, whose son has a farm there between Blankney Gorse and Kirby Green Gorse, is quite broken-hearted. However, I consoled him by promising some relief from his payments at rent day. I never saw anything like it in this country before. It is looking so bright and nice to-day, and I do wish you were here with me and then I should be as happy as the day is long, but I shall be with you again very soon.

His buoyant spirits rose once more with the barometer. "Old Teppy¹ most anxiously asking after you and the chicks, and 'Ah, 'Arry Dear !!'—she said, 'what a time you've been away from them !!' So I have, and it will make it all the dearer getting back to you again. I am going to a ram sale to-morrow. There will be a great gathering of farmers and a large lunch, and I've no doubt I can do good by going there." There was no doubt that he could. A talk

¹ His old nurse, Mrs. Sifton.

with the farmers, himself a farmer among them, whose politics they trusted, and whose sympathy and share in their troubles they valued, was worth more than a political meeting. No wonder they returned the Squire unopposed, though the Conservative Government was severely defeated at the General Election of 1880.

IV

The year 1881, which saw the death of Mr. Chaplin's political leader, was also to see the tragic end of his own happiness. Released from political obligations, he had hastened north to join his wife full of his usual joyous anticipation in his belated holiday and the sport that it was to bring him. Lady Florence remained quietly at Dunrobin with her children, while her husband, anxious to get all the exercise that he could in a comparatively short time, with the all-important object of reducing his weight, usually went up each week to the shooting lodge at Ben Armine for two or three nights for the deer-stalking. His companion was his brother-in-law, Lord Stafford, known in the family as "Strathie". The Chaplins were still considering the position of the house they proposed to build for themselves, and during these brief absences Mr. Chaplin wrote his views with regard to the different sites.

There was as yet no known cause for anxiety with regard to Lady Florence's health, but he was glad of continued assurances that all was well with her.

"I have got your little letter and your telegram, my child," he writes. "It is a great comfort, and I shall not hurry back to-night now, but return probably with Strathie to-morrow.

Perhaps I might even stay to shoot on Thursday, that is to-morrow, but I do not think I shall, and then like a dutiful son-in-law I can help to do the honours to the Episcopal League—ahem !!

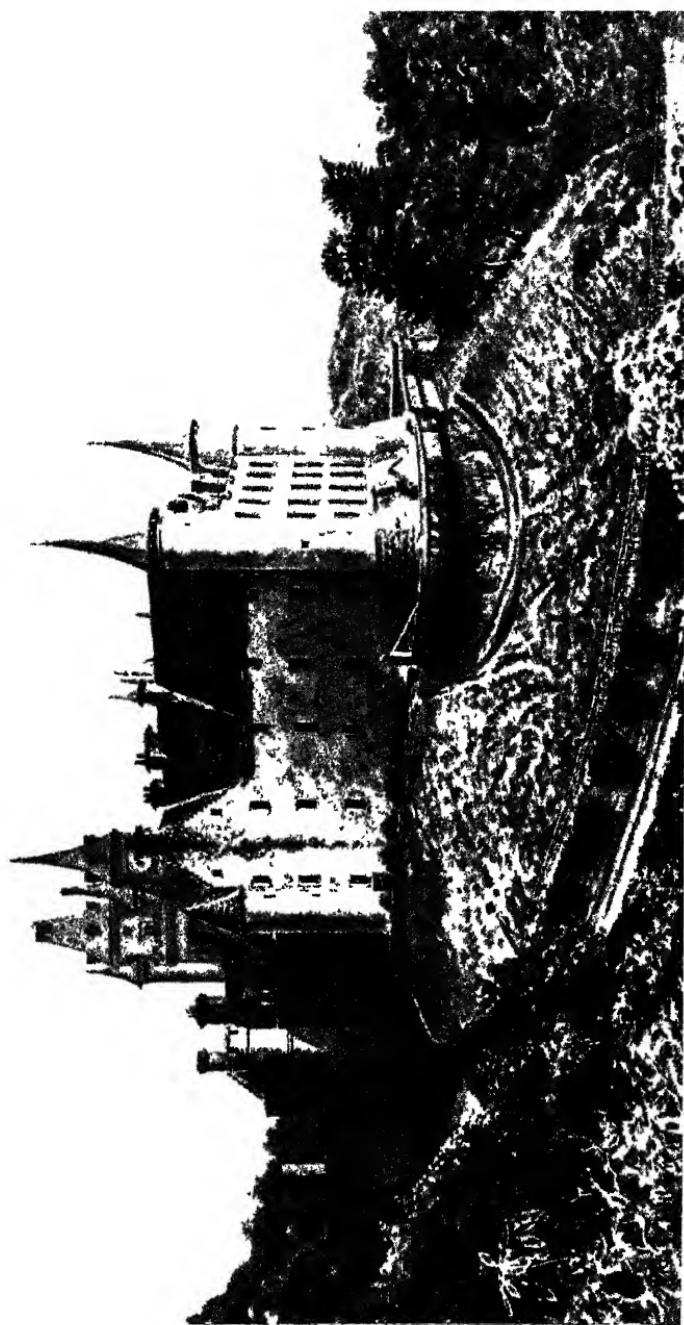
“I am so sorry you were not with us yesterday. You would have been fairly bewitched, I think, under the influence of the shining sunny day and the loveliness of the place. Strathie and I both thought that all the view to the south, south-east, south-west, and west is almost the prettiest thing that we have ever seen in Scotland. We could see to the top of Clibrech, and all the way down Corrie na Fearn till you first come in sight of the loch over the woods. There is really little to choose in the wildness between the West Tops and Ben Loyal. We have looked at three or four sites; the two best I thought were, one, on the opposite side of the loch from here just round the corner of the loch, close to its edge and to a small clump of birches which would be all about the garden and which shut out the ugly bit of north view; and the other on the Corrie na Fearn side, but a little further up the loch than you and I went, with two lovely views to the south-west, south and south-west, one up Corrie na Fearn, and the other looking over the end of Loch Choire, and a little bit of Loch a Varlich with the stream between the two coming in sight, and the birch woods and rocks on the left hanging over it. In this place the whole ugly view up the loch is shut out by the shoulder of the hill which would be behind the house, but it would not be quite so good, I think, for the deer as the other spot. As far as the deer are concerned this place is everything I could wish, and there are a few already about the ground in spite of the winter. There are so few sheep left that it has practically been a forest all this year. Of course there is the road and many etcetera to consider. I have my own idea of the wisest thing to do for next year, but all that we will consider well together. I am inclined to think that a road [to Kinbrace station] and a wooden hut at Loch Choire for next season—which afterwards would do for gillies or servants—

would enable you to see it all thoroughly as well as me, and then we could pick a site deliberately, which we should not be so likely afterwards to regret, as if it was done in a hurry. I really think, child, and you know I am generally right, you will like it much better than Kinloch when you know it as well, and it is the most lovely loch to bathe in, with a beautiful beach which will partly perhaps make up for the sea, and if the sea is a necessity, it is only a morning drive to Tongue to get there. We had a good walk, and I got a good beast coming home.

In the touching account of the last days of her life, written by Mr. Chaplin when he returned to Dunrobin from Blankney after his wife's funeral, he describes the little visit she paid himself and her brother at Sieber's Cross, a half-way house to Ben Armine, twelve miles up the moorland glen road from Dunrobin.

For many reasons she was anxious for a quiet change for a day or two, and partly for that reason and still more, I think, dear child, for my sake and to save me coming back, she came to meet me and Strathie at Sieber's Cross on the Saturday, 24th September, to stay until the following Monday. She came about 5 o/c. We first heard the bells which Dumps wore on her collar, and then to our amusement she came full trot up the hill with Dumps and drove up to the door with her little face all wet from rain and bright as a little sunbeam. We passed a happy evening, we three together.

It was on this very evening that Lady Florence revealed to her husband a disquieting symptom. She characteristically made light of it, and though he felt some anxiety she persuaded him that it was only due to her having strained a sinew in her leg. By Monday she was considerably better, and returned to Dunrobin with Lord Stafford, promising to see a



DUNROBIN CASTLE, SUTHERLAND.

doctor and to report his verdict. This, however, she delayed to do until the middle of the week, and on Wednesday her husband wrote to her :

I hope you are none the worse for Sieber's Cross, and that you have been a good child and seen the doctor. If you haven't, dear, I really want you to see him. . . . I had a long walk yesterday and a goodish climb or two, and I began luckily by killing what they call the ten pointer by 12.80 in Corrie Nessie. You may relieve Strathie by telling him that neither the beast nor his head was worth saving, only 14.6 after all, and his head but a poor one. He had a companion, a very light-coloured deer, about the colour of the bit of blotting-paper I enclose, and I stalked him again afterwards, but did not get a chance. In fact, I did nothing more, but I did get off 3 lbs. in weight. To my horror yesterday morning after Sieber's Cross I was back at 16.7; yesterday evening 16.4; to-night, with luck, I hope 16.2 at least will be reached. It's a lovely morning here, and I am keen to be off; so good-bye, my darling—kiss the children.

Meantime Lady Florence had at length seen her doctor, and his report to the Duchess was so disturbing that on Thursday a note was despatched to Mr. Chaplin, begging him to return. Out on the hills, stalking all day, unaware of any immediate cause for anxiety, he returned to the lodge at Ben Armine in the evening to find the happy confidence with which his wife had managed to inspire him a few days earlier rudely shattered. Too late to get back that night over the rough pathless moorland, he wrote what was to be his last letter to her to be despatched by a boy at daybreak.

Thursday evening, 8.30.—Only just got your note, for I got in late after a long walk. A boy will bring this early in the morning with a pony, and I will follow him as quickly

as I can, and if there is no conveyance at Sieber's Cross I will walk or make my way to Dunrobin somehow. Dear little woman, I wish I were with you now, for where ought I to be except by your side to comfort and cheer you and please God, before many hours I will be. If there was a path I would have started to-night, but it is so dark I could not make my way to Dunrobin if I did till any hour in the morning. I don't mind coming away from here a bit, and I'm only sorry now I left you on Monday, but I hope and pray earnestly, my little one, you will be better when I see you.

On reaching Dunrobin the following morning Mr. Chaplin found his wife decidedly better and much reassured about herself. He ordered the saloon carriage, however, which was to take them south to Blankney, and early in the following week they started, breaking the journey at Inverness.

The next day he records that "as far as Perth we passed, as she told me afterwards, *such a happy day!* It was lovely weather and the scenery enchanting. She felt well and strong, and thoroughly enjoyed it, and I was reassured and as hopeful and satisfied as I could be under the circumstances." The rest of the journey proved very exhausting, though Lady Florence pretended to sleep in order not to alarm her husband.

There was a brief rally the day after their arrival at Blankney, when he was able to draw her in her chair through the gardens in the October sunshine. That was the last happy day they were to spend together. "Dr." Brook, the devoted surgeon and friend at Lincoln, did not conceal from the husband the gravity of the situation. Sir Benjamin Brodie was summoned to a consultation, as well as Mr. Jenner (afterwards Sir William Jenner). But nothing

could save her. Lady Florence's second daughter¹ was born on Saturday, and her birth was followed by convulsions from which she never recovered consciousness. Through the night Dr. Brook and her husband watched by her, and on Sunday there was a slight improvement which continued throughout the day. "At that time", says Mr. Chaplin, "my spirit had revived, and I allowed myself, foolishly perhaps, to become quite sanguine—only, alas, to be bitterly disappointed." On Sunday evening the breathing again became more rapid, and on Monday afternoon "my darling passed away, with her head resting on my shoulder, and with the most beautiful expression on her face as she died".

After her funeral at Blankney Mr. Chaplin returned a stricken man to Dunrobin. To the end of his life the memory of this radiant being, who for five years had given him perfect happiness, held the most sacred place in his memory—a place which was never to be usurped by another woman. He found some consolation in commissioning the beautiful kneeling marble figure of Lady Florence by Sir Edgar Boehm, which he placed in the church of St. Oswald at Blankney—the church in which she had taken so deep an interest.

He received many letters of sympathy in his loss, not only from friends of Lady Florence and himself, but from people of whom he had never heard, telling him of her kindness and consideration for her poorer neighbours and those who were in trouble. Among his letters was one from the present Lord Halifax—an intimate friend from Oxford days, and one who, though very

¹ Florence, the Hon. Mrs. Richard Hoare.

unlike him in character, exerted a great influence over Mr. Chaplin all his life—which brought him perhaps the greatest comfort, for it was cherished to the end among the papers most nearly concerned with his wife.

POWDERHAM CASTLE, EXETER,
Oct. 24/81.

I have not liked to write before, but now that you are perhaps alone at Blankney and every day making your sorrow worse, I want to tell you how much you have been and are in my thoughts. Old times seem like the present, and I am wondering if there is anything at all that I could do for you. My dear friend, though all things change, love and friendship remain. As one feels how insecure all is, and to what chances even our love is exposed in the world, one realises—so it sometimes seems to me—that nothing is so securely our own as our dead. They at least can never forsake us or disappoint us; and though our own desolation remains, and our life seems snapped in two, we shall one day see, when the first bitterness is past, that in taking them out of this mortal life God gives them to us even now, and that in a better way, for ever. I wish one of your brothers, if they are with you, would write and tell me about you. May God help you now and always. It is so hard to perceive that what He wills for us we should not wish otherwise, even if we could.—Ever your most affectionate

CHARLES L. WOOD.

v

Two years after the death of his wife, Mr. Chaplin suffered another heavy bereavement in the loss of his brother Edward, who died in December 1883, leaving his young wife, Lady Gwendolen,¹ with two small children. In a singularly united and affectionate family, these two brothers had from childhood been close friends and companions. They had shared the

¹ Afterwards Lady Gwendolen Little.

same pursuits and interests ; and there was only a year between them. They had married in the same year, and had both represented divisions of Lincolnshire in Parliament.

Colonel Chaplin, “a fine sportsman and fine all-round character”, was greatly beloved by a large circle of relations and friends. The innumerable letters addressed to his brother on his death bear eloquent testimony to the affection he inspired in all who knew him. “We can hardly realise Blankney without his life,” wrote their great-uncle William Ellice, “for he and the old home have been identified with each other in our remembrance of both ever since his schooldays.” And he adds pathetically, “I had not expected to outlive any of you, and now one is gone before. May it please God to spare the other four to me, for as I advance in life the more deeply do I feel the value of those between whom and myself there has been a close tie of affection for so many years.” Lord Charles Beresford (Lord Beresford) wrote with characteristic simplicity on the loss of the “best brother and best friend that ever was”; and there must have been many who shared in his wonder “why fate should have been so hard on you, dear old Harry, who have the kindest and best heart of any one I ever met”.

VI

Edward Chaplin died on December 23, and Mr Chaplin wrote to his little children at Trentham to tell them that he could not spend Christmas with them, as it was impossible for him to leave his young sister-in-law in her distress. The artless condolences

written in the large and careful script of five years old which presently reached him from his elder little girl at Blankney were certainly not among the least appreciated.

DEAR DADDY—I am very sorry you and Aunt Gwen are in trouble, and I saw Uncle Teddy's grave. I hope he will go to Heaven. I have been to the Rectory to tea. Dear Daddy, when are you coming home ? I am going to pick some snowdrops for you.—Your loving EDIE.

Mr. Chaplin was a deeply affectionate father, upon whom, however, the more serious parental responsibilities rested but lightly. His children adored him as a delightful companion, full of good spirits and of endless resources for amusing both them and himself. His visits to Blankney were eagerly looked forward to, and were usually a signal for the bursting of nursery and schoolroom bonds, a headlong rush to greet him, an appeal, easily granted, for a holiday, and the certainty of finding a whole-hearted and sympathetic interest in their dogs, their ponies, their rabbits, and indeed in everything that concerned them. He was intensely proud of his three children, but he seldom wanted to exercise that inconvenient authority which might have brought him into conflict with these gay beings who were always ready to respond to his affection, to enjoy his jokes, and who were already learning to ride as well as any Chaplin parent could desire.

Politics and society made increasing claims upon his time, and as long as he knew his children to be well and happy, he was content to leave the more serious side of their welfare to their devoted Scottish Nanny, Mrs Webster—the family autocrat

long after they had left the nursery—and still more to his wife's relations. The children, from their earliest days, spent much of their time at Trentham, Lilleshall, and Dunrobin, with their grandfather, the Duke of Sutherland. It was more especially their uncle, Lord Stafford, who made himself responsible for the upbringing and training of his sister's children. After the death of their eldest child, the Staffords took them to live with them entirely, and they only went to Blankney as visitors. As they grew older it was "Uncle Strathie" who saw to their education, their discipline, and their moral and physical well-being, and they returned his love and care for them with a filial devotion. When Blankney slipped from their father's too open hands, it was at Stafford House with this same uncle that Mr. Chaplin and his children made their home. Meantime, he descended upon them at frequent intervals like some delightful magician, bringing toys and treats out of his pockets, and often accompanied by other friendly and fascinating grown-up people who were also ready to be entertained and entertaining.

A story is told of how on one occasion, when King Edward, as Prince of Wales, was visiting Blankney, Mr. Chaplin's small son Eric was in his room while he was dressing for dinner. On the dressing-table stood a bowl of Indian corn from which he was in the habit of feeding the pigeons from his window. After his father had gone down to dinner, the small boy had the brilliant idea of spreading a layer of corn between the lower sheet and the blanket on the former's bed. When the exhausted host of a large house party retired at a late hour, sleep was found to be impossible

from a pricking discomfort beneath him. Investigation followed, and it was not until a housemaid had been roused and the bed re-made that the long-suffering parent obtained his rest. When the children came down according to custom the next morning while the guests were at breakfast, the story was told with some humour by the victim. The Prince, delighted by a practical joke very much after his own heart, gave the boy a sovereign, with the promise of another should it be repeated !

Meantime, during their father's long and frequent separations from them, his children wrote him many letters, and also sent him their earliest artistic efforts, all of which were carefully treasured. The excellence of these letters even from the nursery must have satisfied his views with regard to their education, though he always took pains to correct any errors in spelling. Naturally he was kept fully informed of their prowess out hunting. At the age of ten his daughter Edith writes from Lilleshall :

DARLING DADDY—I hope we shall see you soon. We went out hunting on Monday ; we had a splendid run. I got the brush and Eric was blooded. We went out riding yesterday. Marks had set us a race, and when I got half way I pulled up at a gate, as I was going to speak to Eric, when he rushed by on his pony. I was riding a pony that reared, and it was startled because it heard Eric but it did not see him. I could not stop it. It rushed towards a tree and then I was stunned. Marks said because the pony reared up and fell over backwards, but you must not be frightened. I did not hurt myself. I only bruised my eye and my side is a little stiff. I send my best love and kisses to you, darling Daddy.—Your loving little child,

EDIE.

To which her younger sister, less considerate of her father's feelings, added a laborious and brief pencil note: "We went out riding and Edie had a bad fall."

Many are the letters addressed to "Mon bien cher Daddy", in the superior handwriting of the schoolboy. "Nous avons été à la chasse deux fois. La dernière fois mon pony a mis le pied dans un marais et maintenant il boite. Nous avons attrapé un rat ce matin. Baby (Florence) a monté l'âne hier."

Mr. Chaplin, himself always a good correspondent, found time to write frequently to his children, so keeping them in touch, even at a very tender age, with his public life. In the midst of the Home Rule struggle in 1886 he writes :

22 RYDER STREET,
ST. JAMES', S.W.

DARLING CHILDREN—How are you darlings? Well and good and happy, I hope. Daddy is coming to Blankney for Whitsuntide and he has made an offer for a house here, but I don't think they will take it. We are working very hard to beat Mr. Gladstone, and we are going to do it.—Ever your loving
DADDY.

In the same year he wrote to his elder daughter, aged eight :

7 CARLTON GARDENS, S.W.

The riot¹ was all over on Sunday, and I don't much think there will be any more. There are three little mistakes in Edie's letter. I have marked them each with red ink so that you may see them.

The idea referred to above of taking a house in

¹ February 8, 1886. A mob of Socialist unemployed marched from Trafalgar Square through Pall Mall, St. James's Street, Piccadilly, breaking shop windows and doing other damage.

London, where the children could have been with him, did not materialise. The regular life in the country was no doubt better for them, and their father's many engagements would probably have prevented him from seeing a great deal of them even if they were under the same roof. But his interest in them at a distance was none the less active. At Christmas 1888 the little girls are at Lilleshall, and their brother detained by some childish illness at Stafford House. Mr. Chaplin writes from Halton, Tring, where he is staying with Mr. Alfred Rothschild.

DARLING LITTLE EDIE—This is to wish you a very happy and a very merry Christmas, as I can't be with you. *What naughty little things* you have been to have had such very bad colds, and how I should have had to whip you if I had been at Lilleshall. I can see you now, you little thing, the morning I left you in bed, but I didn't know then how naughty you were going to be, with your poor little nose all red. The next time I see you like that I shall ask you a riddle—When is a nose not a nose? Do you know the answer? When it is a little reddish (radish)!!

Old Teppy [his old nurse] has come up to London to spend Christmas with Eric and to look after him now the other nurse is gone. He was looking very bright and well, and I hope to see him again the day after to-morrow. Teppy said in great admiration to me, “ ‘ow ‘andsome he looks”, but you mustn't repeat this for the world. They are going to have all sorts of fun, and Eric gives a little Christmas dinner to Teppy and Mlle. Valentin and Mr. Dawson, who are all in London.

Good-bye, my little Darling.—Your loving DADDY.

Again he writes from Stafford House, where the children have been with him, and his son has gone for his first term to Harrow.

This is only one little line to tell you what dear good children you have been, both of you, and, strange as it may seem, how sorry I am to lose you even for so short a time. In a day or two, or when I come back from Paris, I will write to you both or one of you again, and a longer letter. The poor pig [Eric] has just gone full of plans for my going to Harrow for Speech Day (which I know I should hate) and of his coming up for an exeat when you are all here, which I should love.

On one occasion the children had heard that their father had had a fall out hunting, and had probably written to remonstrate, for he writes to his elder daughter :

Thanks so much for your letter. I am so glad you like the pony. If Eric cuts the corners and doesn't run fair, we shall be obliged to have him up before the Jockey Club. I *didn't* fall off. I was pulled off by some boughs of a tree jumping over a hedge and ditch under a tree. I fell backwards on to my left side, and the doctor says I have torn some of the muscles, but I am bandaged up and getting better, and I hope very likely I shall see you at Blankney very soon.

In 1892 their grandfather, the third Duke of Sutherland, died, and Mr. Chaplin's children spent nearly all their time with their uncle, now the fourth Duke, and his wife, at Trentham and at Dunrobin, while Stafford House was soon to become their permanent London home. Mr. Chaplin's finances were by now severely embarrassed. The problem of cutting his expenses to match his diminishing revenues had proved beyond him, and it became evident that Blankney, the home of so many generations of Chaplins, by now heavily mortgaged, must soon pass into other hands. It was acquired by Lord Londes-

borough, whose father had been one of the chief mortgagees. Some of the outlying property still remained to Mr. Chaplin, and for many years it was his hope that Blankney itself might ultimately be bought back again for a Chaplin grandson.

His young daughters and their brother were no doubt perfectly aware of the trouble that was impending, and the loss of a home, even sometimes a change of a home, is one of the most poignant sorrows of childhood. In the correspondence of '93 and '94 it is clear that the little girls had opened their hearts to their father on the matter, and he was probably no less concerned by his children's appeals than by his own overwhelming anxieties and perplexities. There is naturally nothing of such matters in his letter to his younger daughter on her twelfth birthday—only a parent's fellow-feeling for his child's exchequer.

Friday, 6th October, 1893.

SWEET LITTLE CHILD—I don't forget that it is your birthday on Sunday, and, before I go, I write you this to wish you every blessing and many Happy Returns of the Day. You are of that age when every succeeding birthday is a pleasurable event. I am getting to a time of life when I prefer to forget them. But in your case a little present is no disagreeable reminder of the Day, and as I sent you a sovereign the other day, it occurs to me that a little purse to put it in, or to put whatever remains of it in, may be appropriate. And your purse will have this advantage, that it is made of "pure gold" itself, and so, if the worst comes to the worst and you find it quite empty, you can always melt it; take it to the Mint or Bank of England, and they will give you sovereigns for what remains of it in exchange according to the weight.

But in the following month he writes in a more serious vein to his daughter Edith :

CARLTON CLUB, S.W., 5th Nov. 1893.

MY DARLING CHILD—I got your letter and Miss Harvey's when I returned from abroad last Monday. Since then I have been at Wynyard till yesterday. I quite understand, you little Dear, all that you and the others think and feel about *Home*, and you know, as far as I am in a position to do so, I shall always remember. I like you always to tell me all you think, you know, Dears!! and you must always do so, whatever may be the outcome. I have just been to Stafford House to ask when you were going to be there, and I find you have already been and gone. You came the day after I arrived, and you left the day before I returned, which was singularly unlucky. If I can get away, and as soon as I can get away, I will let you know, but at present, not having yet been to the House of Commons, I hardly know what I shall be wanted for. But I must come and have a day or two with you at Blankney, and I am, you sweet, with all my love to you and little Florence,—Your loving FATHER.

Mr. Chaplin was never again in a position to give the children that home of their very own to which they so naturally and pathetically clung, though it is certain that they could not have found a happier substitute than was provided for them by their uncle. But whatever his preoccupations elsewhere, and in spite of an apparent carelessness as to his children's movements, his response to their joys and troubles was as unfailing as it was spontaneous, and won him a larger share of their love than is sometimes bestowed upon a more painstaking and home-keeping parent.

In the spring of 1894 the little girls were in further trouble over the departure of their devoted governess, Miss Harvey, a very real grief to motherless children. They took leave of their father in great distress when they started with their uncle for Dunrobin, and the following day Mr. Chaplin, much con-

cerned, writes to his younger daughter, whose sorrow had naturally been the more demonstrative.

STAFFORD HOUSE, ST. JAMES'.

YOU SWEET LITTLE CHILD ! !—I longed to go off with you last night and take you on my knee and tell you all I thought and felt about you, little Darling ! ! but you had to go one way and I have had to go another, and the only thing to do is to wait until we meet again, which will not be so very long after all, and then perhaps I can tell you all and everything I think about you now. This at all events, I am sure, Darling, that you know already—that there is nothing in all this world so precious to me as my love for you and Edie and Eric, and nothing that I hope and pray for more earnestly every day than the happiness of each of you ; and though in this life there are, and always will be as long as any of us live, clouds and darkness at times, there is also much that is bright and happy, and before you get this I feel pretty sure it will be all sunshine with you again. Post is just going, but I will write to you and Edie again directly. I hope you did not torment poor Uncle too much on the journey and that Gyp and the birds slept well.

In his children's absence he undertook to see a governess whom their aunt had engaged for them, and he wrote to his elder daughter :

STAFFORD HOUSE, April 14.

Thank you, dear child, for your dear little letter of Thursday a thousand times, and thank the little one a thousand times for hers. I was so pleased with you, dear, and I appreciate all you say and all you have done more than I can tell you. And as I am going away to Paris to-morrow on business, and may not be back again for a few days, I am now going to tell you all I know about the future arrangements—then you must tell it to little Florrie, when and how you think best. To begin with, I have seen, since I came back, a lady who, in the future, after you come back to London, will take the place of Miss Harvey with you, and I liked her

very much. There is something very sympathetic about her, and I feel *very confident* that when you little things see and know her you will like her too. I may be wrong, but that is my strong belief, and you know, darlings, that nothing would induce me to take anyone unless I had the best reasons in the world to believe that you would both be happy with her. Apart from the impression she gave me herself, she comes recommended in the highest degree by people I know everything about and whom I have known for years. I tell you all this, dear, because you are not only getting older every day, but you are older than your years, and I feel that I can talk and write to you as if you were already a little woman. But although I have told you this much, don't run away with the idea, or let little Florrie run away with the idea, that you are not to see Miss Harvey again. On the contrary, I have particularly asked her to come and see you, and she will do so, and she knows exactly how much I think and feel that I am indebted to her for all the care she has taken of you little things till now. When you will come back to London I do not quite know at present. A little stay at Dunrobin, I should think, would do you good, but whenever you do come I shall be here, and, "strange to say", to borrow an impudent little girl's expression, I too "am looking forward to seeing you", though with what kind of feelings I won't exactly say, except that they are mixed. You behaved so badly once or twice at Blankney, especially in the mornings, little Florrie particularly about the papers, that it is sometimes with a feeling of relief when I take up the *Times*, I think—Well! it won't be snatched away this morning at all events. And now, you little darlings—Good-bye for the present, and God bless you both.

He adds a characteristic postscript :

I am so stupid I cannot recollect the lady's [the governess] name, and though I had a letter from her, I have mislaid it. Aunt Millie will be able to tell you.

And then, as if to remind his fifteen-year-old

daughter that, after all, she is still a child, he encloses a very spirited letter he has written to "Miss Gyp", her dog, which he concludes with some suitable grandparental advice.

Don't be too venturesome with the rabbits, for if they are very numerous and you are quite alone, they might turn on you, and fancy being torn to pieces alive by a hundred infuriated rabbits! You know what happened to the little Beagle, and how the fox turned on him and nearly caught and ate him, after the other little Bs. had turned off on a hare, and take warning by his fate and from the words of your good and wise and dear grandfather.

It was a great happiness to Mr. Chaplin to have a daughter growing up who was a real companion to him when they were together, and who was to revive and keep fresh in his memory so many of the attributes of the wife whom he had lost. When in 1897 Blankney had finally passed into the hands of Lord Londesborough, and his possessions were being sorted and removed, he found obvious comfort in writing to her in the midst of a melancholy business :

STAFFORD HOUSE, 21st Feb./97.

DEAREST EDIE—Harris [his valet] has turned out to be a scoundrel and has been stealing some of my things. This, in addition to other considerations, has decided me to send to you a number of little things which have recently come up from Blankney, and which up till now have always been kept in your dear Mother's room there. I have been through them all to-day, and with the exception of my letters to her, poor Darling,—I think she must have kept them nearly all,—and other letters I have burnt, I send them all to you, and I should like them to be in your keeping. I will try to give you a rough list of what they are. There is the watch she wore herself and a head ornament of pink and white coral. These I should like you to have yourself. There is

also her own Bible and many little Prayer Books and similar things, which you and Florrie will divide. A curious old Highland clasp for a plaid, given by Strathie's grandmother to poor old Alister, and given by him, I think, to your Mother. In a little brown bag you will find photos of her as a child, and letters from Uncle (Duke of Sutherland) and from his father and mother to her. There are many other things that used to be in her rooms which I can hardly describe, but some of which Uncle will remember ; and among other things are her foxes' brushes, many of them killed after good runs in Staffordshire, some in Lincolnshire and one from Sandringham. I am afraid I have not made it very clear, but indeed, child, it is the saddest afternoon that I have passed for many days. It all comes back to me as if it was only yesterday, and for the moment I am quite unmanned. Some time, when I can get away again to Trentham, I will tell you more about them. One of the photos was of poor old Dot [her dog]—exactly what he was.—Ever your loving

HENRY CHAPLIN.

VII

Mr. Chaplin took the keenest interest in his children's horsemanship. From their infancy they were taught to think, speak, and dream of hunting and riding almost like a religion. Lady Londonderry, as a child, used frequently to be lifted on to Hermit's back and ride him round his box—a kinder, better-dispositioned animal never breathed. The little girl swelled with pride, though she realised no more than that the horse was much larger and taller to sit on than her pony, but the awed and anxious looks of the grown-ups pleased her enormously. Mr. Chaplin chose their ponies with as great an eye to their good points as to those of his own horses. In some cases they were more handsome than suitable for children to ride, and there was always a certain anxiety, not to say

fear, attached to riding with "Daddy". His horses were hot and easily upset; he was always a strong advocate of the *haute école*, and while engaged in trying to make his mounts bridle properly and rein back on their hind legs, it was hardly conducive to good results for two or three small children to rush suddenly past him on their ponies, urged on by shouting and a great deal of clicking of tongues. "Don't patter past me, children, like that," roared their father, "and keep away from my horse's hind legs !! " This Mr. Chaplin's horse often effected of itself by careering into space, leaving the breathless children far behind.

On one occasion Mr. Chaplin was out with a party from Blankney at Wellingore—Lord and Lady Ormonde, Lord Waterford, and Lord Desborough. Lady Londonderry, then quite a small child, was taken out hunting too. In a letter referring to this episode he says: "You, with never-to-be-forgotten naughtiness, instead of going home as ordered with Brown, if the hounds went over the Vale, waited for them to see if they turned back. I was riding down a furrow in a field just to the left of the hounds, and I caught sight of you driving Fidget at a fence much too big for any ordinary pony, and you only just escaped falling into a ditch at least 10 ft. wide and almost as deep; so much so that on Endymion (a hunter 17½ hands high), when I turned over the place where you jumped, I had to shake him up and make him stretch himself to get over it." The little girl remembers the episode very well—the beloved fat pony, shaped like a pig, the anxiety of keeping her eyes on the hounds, and of eluding her father and the groom. The moment



MR. CHAPLIN AND HIS GRANDSON, VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH.

she saw her father leave the lane and ride down the furrow of the ploughed field, she thought she was safe and that he would not look back. Away she went too, whacked the pony as she came to the fence, and the little creature rose in the air and made a fearful effort. Its fore-feet just reached the farther side of the drain and with a great struggle it clambered out, and she found herself confronted with her father. Some instinct had made him look round, and he never ceased to relate the story of his horror on seeing the pony disappearing into the ditch. He turned back and found both pony and rider unhurt, the latter in the act of administering another good whack. "You naughty child!" he said, "I told you to go home; these ditches are much too large for your pony." "Yes, Daddy! but it was such a pity!! and I did whack her, didn't I?"

At other times he would read *Jorrocks* aloud to the children. Only understanding bits of it, they laughed hilariously, not less at their father than at the book. He used to be so overcome with laughter himself that his voice was half choked with emotion and the tears trickled down his face. Mr. Chaplin's rendering of the Ongar Castle and the bathroom scenes, and especially Mr. Jorrocks's nightmare, in which he dreamt he was chained to the wall, starving, in sight of a roast goose (here Mr. Chaplin's voice vibrated with the horror of it), was most dramatic and humorous, and all his relatives, old and young, would beseech him to read. Those who know and love *Handley Cross* will appreciate how much hilarity and mirth was added to the book by Mr. Chaplin's rendering of it.

One Easter holiday Mr. Chaplin leased Mr. Otho Paget's beagles from him for the children to hunt with at Blankney. Major Tempest writes from Coleby in February 1894: "I think it will be a very good thing for the hunt, for your beagles to stir the country up. We have had such a lot of outlying foxes, it may drive them into the covers. . . . I heard of you in Leicestershire, going as you did of old—right ahead." Mr. Chaplin, always a boy in spirit, was as keen over the beagle pack as any child. There is a charming little picture of him riding his horse Endymion, in the middle of Otho Paget's beagles, with Ben Capel, the Blankney huntsman, as whip, mounted on a very diminutive pony. Some great hunts took place, the children lying flat along their ponies, going for all they were worth, with Mr. Chaplin riding with the greatest zest. No one at Blankney ever dreamt of running with the beagles on their ten toes.

VIII

Mr. Chaplin had a nature formed for society. Always ready to entertain or to be entertained, he was a most sought-after guest, and there was no notable hostess of his day who did not regard him as a welcome addition to her dinner-table or her house party.

No memory of the Squire would be complete which did not include the extreme care of his appearance: the dress coat with the black velvet collar which he always wore, long after it had fallen into disuse, and the crush hat which he invariably carried in the evening. His formal bow over his hostess's hand on

entering a drawing-room was a part of that old-world courtesy which was one of his chief characteristics throughout his life. It was exemplified in his ordinary acceptance of an invitation. "Mr. Chaplin will have the honour of waiting on Lady —— at dinner on the —— of ——, etc." It must have been a sore trial to one of his meticulous habits when a rather raw country servant, having been told to leave his master's cards at certain houses where he had dined, interpreted the order to mean *playing cards*.

The beautiful women who ruled over the smaller and more exclusive society of the 'eighties—the Duchess of Manchester (afterwards Duchess of Devonshire), Lady Hamilton (Mary Ann, Duchess of Abercorn), Lady Lonsdale, Lady Londonderry, Lady Dudley—were among his chief personal friends. It was an intimate and brilliant society, and its members, when the London season was over, repaired its ravages at the fashionable German spas, gathered again in the country houses for the shooting, and later met in Paris or on the Riviera. Mr. Chaplin was a good letter-writer, and in an age when letter-writing was still enjoyed as a pleasant means of communication, he kept up a large correspondence. Few of his own letters have been preserved, but he kept many of those of his friends, which may serve as some record of the social life of a fast-vanishing generation. His correspondence with men was chiefly on sport and politics, but his women correspondents were entertained with lighter matters.

Lady Lonsdale,¹ both before and after she became

¹ Third daughter of Lord Herbert of Lea (Mr. Sidney Herbert); married first in 1878 the Earl of Lonsdale, who died in February 1882, and secondly in May 1885, Earl de Grey, only son of the Marquis of Ripon.

Lady de Grey, wrote to him constantly. From Paris, in the spring of 1883, she sends news of her doings :

I came in the same train with the Cadogans, with whom I dine to-night, and we are to go to see "Feodora" afterwards, my second time, but Sarah is splendid. I could never tire of seeing her. There is to be another small revolution on Sunday. The last one, they say, was very amusing, but this time, if the mob get tiresome, the soldiers have received orders to fire. Hitherto a charge of cavalry has been considered sufficient. I am living [in the Rue Cambon] next to a baker's shop, which is the spot they always make for on these occasions, but when they have broken the windows and got the bread, they throw it into the gutter, which shows they are not really in want and that all the row is merely a case of trying it on because the Government has shown itself to be so miserably weak.

What a tribute to Gambetta's memory ! Though we may not agree with his politics, one cannot deny that he understood the French people.

Lady Lonsdale, like many of Mr. Chaplin's friends, found him useful, not only in choosing suitable horses for her, but also in selling them, even though he had occasionally to buy them himself ! "I want so much to show you the brown horse I have for sale," she writes. "If you don't like it, perhaps you will be able to suggest some means of getting rid of it. I become more depressed about it every day. I have no use for it, and it eats its head off. I have another horse in Paris which I really think you would like, but I will tell you about it on Saturday." And later : "You cannot think what a worry you have taken off my shoulders by saying you will keep the horse at Blankney, though I am not quite sure whether I

ought to let you do it ; in fact, I have a great deal to thank you for, though you reverse the proper order by saying you are grateful to me, and what for ? I have never done anything for you. I wish I could, for I feel your kindness very, very much."

Presently, she writes again from Cannes :

I am so glad the horse is turning out so well and that you are satisfied with him. I have one in Paris which I really think you would like to go in your team. I am most anxious to show him to you. I go back there on Tuesday, I hope. You ought to come to Paris for a little rest, and it is not far from Monte Carlo. The weather fails to quell the spirits of the Duchess of Manchester, though I am afraid she must find this spot sadly dull. However, she goes to Nice next week, and to-day she is off in all the snow to have a gamble at Monte Carlo.

The Duchess de Luynes has fifteen young ladies stopping with her ; such a babel goes on as never was heard before. Everybody here is very angry with Lord Wolverton for asking Clemenceau to meet the G.O.M. Anything that does the old wretch harm gives me great satisfaction.

After his wife's death Mr. Chaplin occasionally took furnished houses in London, but Stafford House, as we have seen, ultimately became his headquarters, and here and at Dunrobin his children, after the loss of Blankney, also found their home. As long as Blankney was his he continued to entertain there on the lavish scale which was his habit, and in the earlier days of his widowerhood he also rented houses at Ascot for the races. He was an admirable host, and invitations to his house parties were eagerly sought after. As discriminating in his choice of guests as he was generous in their entertainment, his epicurean tastes further assured them a cook with a nicer and more subtle

understanding of the art than was readily to be found on these shores. His exact taste as a gourmet is remembered in connection with one occasion when he was dining at Devonshire House, and sent word on the following morning to the Duchess that when ortolans were served at dinner, the grapes which accompany them should always be stoned !

To the end of his life Mr. Chaplin took an honest delight in the pleasures of the table. Nature had endowed him with a noble appetite, and he saw no reason why he should stint it. He was a lover both of quantity and quality: a connoisseur, but also a hungry and healthy mortal. Once, in or about the year 1905, at a dinner given by a Conservative statesman, a young man observed that the vintage port, which he himself was unable to touch, was being heavily punished by his neighbour, Mr. Chaplin, and he pointed out the contrast. "Ah!" said Mr. Chaplin, "all my life I have lived according to a very simple plan. It is always to have what I like, when I like it, and as much of it as I like." This simple plan, faithfully followed, brought with it, no doubt, its penalties, but they were manfully faced. On one occasion in the later years of his life, a friend found him with his foot on a stool, suffering from a severe attack of gout. "This pain", he said, "is simply Hell, but I rejoice to think that in my youth I earned every twinge of it many times over!" Once he was in bed at Stafford House after a bad fall. His servant, by mistake, gave him a very strong liniment, which he drank. Consternation ensued, and the doctor was summoned ; but Mr. Chaplin, dreading some interference with his food supplies, sent for two chops and a

bottle of champagne, which he disposed of before the doctor arrived.

Lady Lonsdale shows some temerity as well as an exact knowledge of his tastes when she writes to him before his Ascot party in 1884.

Now I want to ask you to take a man cook who was with me when you dined with me in that poky little house in Queen Street. He really is very good and was for years at the English Embassy at Paris under their famous chef. . . . I am busy trying on clothes for Ascot, to which Mungo¹ [her brother] and I are much looking forward. The party sounds charming. Will you have room for Algy Lennox, do you think? I know you like him, and I think he would be a very nice addition. Do you want another couple? If so, how about the Fanes? Will you find out for me if I must wear mourning?² and if so, if white and grey are considered sufficiently so, for I am ordering my dresses and must know?

Lady Lonsdale's future host had, it seems, been of some assistance to her on this occasion. Mr. Chaplin was exceedingly good-natured at all times about putting money on to "a good thing" for his friends, which was particularly convenient when a heavy dressmaker's bill was in question. She writes again from Paris: "I cannot thank you enough, and I cannot realise that I have made so much money. I don't think I must bet any more for the present. I am so afraid of losing some of my winnings and I want to spend them."³ The resolution, however, was of short duration, for she writes a few days later: "When

¹ Hon. Michael Herbert (1857-1903), afterwards the popular British Ambassador to Washington.

² H.R.H. the Duke of Albany died in March 1884.

³ It was very clever of Mr. Chaplin to win money at this particular Ascot, for it was a bookmakers' festival. On the first two days the Ring had 12 victories to their credit out of 14 races!

I said I did not want to bet again, I meant I wanted to keep my money and not gamble with it, but of course if you know of another very good thing, I should like to be on, *please.*" The extent of Mr. Chaplin's good-nature in this matter may be gathered from a later letter in which Lady Lonsdale says : " I should like to be 'on' if you know of a really good thing, but it seems to me that in this style of betting the advantage is always on my side, for you never tell me what I lose ! " This was probably true, not only where Lady Lonsdale was concerned, but in the case of some other of his women friends to whom Mr. Chaplin was so obliging in recommending a "good thing".

In September Lady Lonsdale writes to him from Mar Lodge :

We have had a most successful week here, the party consisting of the Prince, Colonel Teesdale, Mr. Knollys, Consuelo Mandeville, Carrie Hamilton, Minnie Paget, Mr. Finch, Lord Langford and Mr. Hall. We had a dance one evening and a deer drive the following day, when the Prince killed 8 stags and Herbert Bismarck 2, one a Royal. In the evening the corpses were all laid out in front of the house and the usual torchlight *orgie* took place. The Prince made a speech and Bismarck too, which he did very well. After that we played at charades till about 2 o'clock, every one falling asleep except the Prince, who was as fresh as if he had just got up. I never in my life met with so much energy before, equalled only by that of the Duchess of Manchester, who is not here this year, and we consequently feel like a lot of children without a school-mistress. There are no rows, and no one interferes with our most innocent amusements, which appear to consist mostly in dancing, playing hockey in the hall with sticks, and battledore and shuttlecock.

I am giving myself an entire holiday from my hard work (?)

and have not opened a book since I have been here. Sir Edward Malet marries Lady Ermyntrude Russell and Lord Burgharsh Miss Naylor. Bismarck is not coming here as Ambassador yet, nor is Munster going to leave. This is, I think, all my news. I return to Dupplin on Wednesday, and shall remain there a fortnight, and then back to London. Blankney will have to be later, I suppose, on account of the Session, but we might talk about that at Dupplin. . . .

In the ensuing winter Lady Lonsdale finds Mr. Chaplin's presents of flowers, etc., and the use of his carriages as she passes through London very welcome.

12 BRUTON STREET, Dec. '85.

DEAR FRIEND—You really are too kind. Might I have the brougham and *one horse* to take me out to dinner to-night at 7 o'clock? I should be so grateful, but do not send your head coachman or your good horse if you can avoid it, as it is *so cold*. I am so very grateful.

And in this same month she writes again, conscious, apparently, that she is accepting more kindness than she has either the right or the wish to encourage. "I have an uncomfortable feeling that you are beginning to worry again; it distresses me so much that I should be the cause of any unhappiness to you." Thereupon she departs abruptly to Paris, and in the following April writes from there to announce her engagement to Lord de Grey. "I have been laid up with my eyes, or would have written sooner to tell you that I am going to marry Lord de Grey. You are such a true friend that I believe you will really be glad when I tell you that I have at last found peace and comfort, for you know how much trouble I have had all my life, though I am afraid it was mostly of my own making. Please do not let our friendship

cease. It is not so common a thing that we can afford to lose it easily, and you have always been more than kind and good to me."

In the following spring Lady de Grey is writing to Mr. Chaplin from Paris—quite in her old manner.

60 RUE DE VARENNE.

I was so sorry not to see you before you went. The day you called de Grey and I were already very late for an appointment and had to hurry off. Henri from Bignon's delivered your message of "good-bye" very nicely. Can you make out what day we go to Blankney? I ask because Ferdy [Ferdinand Rothschild] invited us to Waddesdon from the Saturday till Monday, so if we go to you Monday we can accept Waddesdon. You know Ferdy is rather a fussy person about his parties, and does not like to be kept long waiting for an answer. I suppose it depends on when you and Lord Randolph can get away, doesn't it? What have you done about Ascot?

And a few days later:

Let us say *Tuesday* as Whit-Monday is such a terrible day to travel. I am looking forward so much to my visit to you. George Curzon's address is 34 Wimpole Street. Have you asked him for Ascot? I am very busy shopping, which begins at 10 and goes on till 5 every day, with a short interlude for refreshments. Lady Randolph arrived yesterday to my great surprise, with the lady you admire, Mrs. Jack Leslie, and we are going to breakfast with them to-morrow.

Lady de Grey spent much of her time with her brother Mungo, to whom she was greatly devoted, in the south of France, and during his visits to Monte Carlo Mr. Chaplin also did what he could to contribute to the comfort and entertainment of the invalid. "I am writing to ask you to be very kind and look after Mungo at Monte Carlo, for he is very unwell, and I am

very anxious about him. Will you introduce him to Lady Wilton, as then she would invite him to dinner. Please write me a line to 12 Bruton Street and tell me how you think he is looking. What changes ! It quite takes one's breath away. It is weary work—a political life nowadays."

It was in 1887 that Lady de Grey launched her scheme for improving English opera. To prevent two or three operas being run simultaneously in different houses, it was proposed that the good singers should all be united in one. Augustus Harris was to take Covent Garden, and Madame Albani and the two brothers de Reszke, who at that time were singing at the Paris Opera, were to form the nucleus of his company. Mr. Chaplin's good offices were called upon by Lady de Grey to arrange the business side. "A better manager could not be found ", writes this autocratic lady, " for whatever he undertakes he does thoroughly well. Kindly see Saunders or Montagu as soon as you can, so as to remove any chance of Covent Garden being hired by others. It is all in their interest to let the theatre to a successful manager, as it heightens the value of it, and it really would be worth their while to let Harris have it cheaper than any one else. This you might represent to them, adding at the same time that he has strong support from society. Don't forget to watch over Box B. for me."

Mr. Chaplin did not share the musical tastes and abilities of his sister, Lady Radnor, though as a young man he had had a good voice, which he had lost after an illness. But he flung himself heartily into the business of the opera, and there was no

difficulty in persuading a sufficient number of influential people to become subscribers. The Prince of Wales headed the list, and Mr. Chaplin put his name down for the omnibus box. Among the names on the first list of subscribers for boxes are those of the Rothschild brothers, the Duchess of Montrose, the Duchess of Newcastle, the Bischoffsheims, the Charles Beresfords, the Borthwicks, and many others.

Mr. Chaplin was one of those who entertained the de Reszkes on their arrival in London, and the following letter from Lady de Grey suggests a frustrated week-end at Blankney :

12 BRUTON STREET.

Jean de Reszke has asked me to write to you to ask you if they may postpone their visit to another Sunday. As they do not apparently write down their engagements, they entirely forgot that Edouard promised long ago to sing *professionally* at Alfred Rothschild's Sunday evening, 21st, with Patti, and Jean had also promised to be present. When Alfred came and reminded us all of this on Tuesday evening we were horrified, and he seemed so dreadfully distressed about his concert that we said at once we would write and ask you to be kind enough to change the day of your party.

This is the least I could do, as he had already put off Patti a fortnight ago in order not to interfere with *my* little Sunday party, which you honoured with your presence. As Edouard is paid a good round sum for singing at Alfred's, one cannot ask him to give it up, and if the two brothers are separated they are perfectly miserable. In addition to which, Sunday 21st will be just before the first performance of "Othello", and Jean is in a great fright of catching cold or tiring himself. *I am so sorry* about it, and I cannot think how we can all have been so stupid as to forget Alfred's party the night of my dinner. I know you will understand the situation, and forgive them. You must stop in London too, for it really will be a lovely concert.

IX

The Squire's parties were, as we have said, arranged with all the care and forethought of the perfect host, but his good-nature was always equal to making a social sacrifice in the cause of friendship. On one occasion he was about to entertain a large party at Blankney when he was appealed to at the last moment by Lady Dudley to resign the lady who should have been one of the brightest stars in his firmament, Mme. de Murrieta, to complete a party at Witley Court.

Are you feeling very angry with me, I wonder, for my telegram last night? I want a lady badly, and she would do so well. She told me she was engaged to you, but I thought perhaps you would be a dear and let her off. There are not many women who suit both the Prince and Princess, and I cannot take in a couple. . . . You are always so kind to me. I hoped you would not mind.

Meanwhile, Mme. de Murrieta finds herself in an embarrassing predicament.

"Grieved as I feel," she writes to Mr. Chaplin "at the idea of not going to Blankney, I wanted also to prove to Lady Dudley that she did not appeal in vain to my friendship, as I never forget my gratitude to our Long Friend [Lady Lonsdale], when two years ago she helped me at the last hour out of an identical trouble when the Prince came here [Wadhurst Park]. Are you very angry? Do tell me frankly. Meanwhile I am expecting every moment to hear how you and Lady Dudley have disposed of my humble person, and I only trust that I shall not repeat the fable of the donkey between the two haystacks, as, loving you both so dearly, it would be most grievous to my heart."

Mr. Chaplin, with his usual courtesy, relinquished

his guest on condition that the lady wrote him a full account of the doings at Witley. This she does with some spirit.

It is with very great pleasure that I keep my promise of telling you how this party goes on. At first I feared there was too much electricity for it to go off satisfactorily, but luckily everything has settled down comfortably and the result is a most cheery and happy party in which every one does its d—ndst to be happy and cheerful. . . . Yesterday we all lunched with the shooters, and stayed out the whole afternoon. H.R.H. was delighted with a new arrangement of his guns, which, he says, makes him kill everything, and he certainly shot very well, the bag being over 1100 head, but they expect more to-morrow, while to-day was a very short day. Most of us again lunched out and walked for a little while, but such a hurricane came on that we have just returned home quite early to chat and play the piano and myself to write, not such an easy matter while they all jabber round me.

I suppose you know the party, but anyhow here it is—Gosfords, de Falbes, Consuelo [Duchess of Manchester], Gladys [Lady Lonsdale], Lords de Grey, Hardwicke, Oliver [Montagu], Andrew [Cockerell], and your humble servant,—everything of course most beautifully done, and poor Georgina [Lady Dudley] more happy but still nervous. To-night we are to have a band and full liveries by Royal desire, and, *of course*, we have been photographed. If you go to Wadhurst on Saturday, as I hope, I will give you more details which are better not written. . . . Adrian writes such glowing accounts of Blankney that I long to go there.

With such a multiplicity of engagements it is not unnatural that an energetic politician and sportsman became occasionally confused. Lady Elcho¹ writes :

¹ Now Countess of Wemyss.

RABY CASTLE, DARLINGTON,
September 5th, '88.

I got your letter yesterday and hasten to enlighten you. I think it's the most difficult thing in the world, when one is rushing about all *over the world*, to keep one's invitation letters, in fact *any* letters. I have to keep Hugo's [Lord Elcho] business letters as well as my own pleasure ones. I stick them into my precious red bag, so I always know where they are. Saturday, November 10th, is the day we want you to come to Stanway to shoot the week of the 12th. (I am *so glad* you can come, for *you have* promised to come, altho you don't know *when*!) I hope this date doesn't clash with anything very nice that you want to do! But, anyhow, you belong to us for that week. Of course, you could come Saturday, and I think it's better fun. One has longer time to warm up gradually, and by the middle of the week we hope to be all in splendid form—shooting, joking, laughing, to say nothing of racing!!!

You shall have as many opportunities for revenge as you like. I'm not afraid!!! I also have been climbing mountains and have gone up 7 lbs. since Scotland (weighed at the railway station before and after). This shows I am in better condition than I was in the summer, and I shall try to keep it up! There's a nice long grass terrace behind the house which will do admirably, and on which I have already raced at school feasts. You shall have the whole week to practise so as to get to know the course also. This morning I break-fasted with the shooters at 7.15 and took an hour's walk afterwards. The party here is not lively, but the weather is nice.

We are going to Glen on the 10th, and then to Gosford for a fortnight; Whittingham for a few days, and London in October, and then Stanway. We have just accepted to go to Easton on Monday, 22nd October—I wonder if you'll be there! I hope so.

I will tell you who's going to be at Stanway—the Greys, George,¹ Sibell,² "Elchos", Lady Dudley, and Lady Mandeville.

¹ The late Right Hon. George Wyndham, her brother.

² The Countess Grosvenor, Mr. Wyndham's wife.

ville, Mr. Balfour (for the Sunday), Evan,¹ Major Wynne Finch, and last but not least, yourself. I hope you think that a nice party ! and now good-bye.

I hope you will have a good Doncaster !!—Yours v.
sincerely,

MARY ELCHO.

The Duchess of Leinster was another friend and correspondent of Mr. Chaplin's. In 1890 her health was already failing, and, obliged as she was to winter abroad, his letters, filled with an account of his many occupations and of common friends, were no doubt a real pleasure to her, as were his visits and the beautiful roses with which he kept her supplied when she was in London. She sends him an account of her sister Lady Helen Vincent's wedding.

CARTON, MAYNOOTH,
Sept. 23, 1890.

Many thanks for your long and graphic account of all you have done since we last met. Mar, I have always heard, is lovely, and the most delightful place to stay at imaginable, and judging from your account you must be having capital sport besides.

The journey from Nuremberg was horrible, but we got home quite safely, having only lost *en route* most of our luggage and my maid ! The maid, however, arrived next day, and as my luggage has been heard of, perhaps there is some hope of seeing that some day also. Helen's wedding went off very well—it was a nice bright day, and she looked most ideally and poetically lovely. I hardly knew Edgar Vincent before, but was quite charmed with him. I always knew he was clever, but had no idea he was so delightful in other ways besides, and, of course, he is devoted to H., and she seems so happy and contented that I felt quite selfish at my inability to conceal how miserable I was at saying good-bye to her for so long. She was very pleased with the Hermit

¹ Hon. Evan Charteris, Lord Elcho's brother.

blotting-book ; indeed, that and a splendacious bracelet from the Grand Vizier¹ shared the general interest the day of the wedding.

Mr. Chaplin was a faithful friend to those in his most intimate circle. Louise, Duchess of Manchester, writes to him after her marriage to the Duke of Devonshire in 1892 :

BOLTON, SKIPTON,
August, 1892.

DEAR MR. CHAPLIN—I knew you would be pleased, and thank you very much for all your good wishes and kind congratulations. He is such a dear, so you may imagine how happy I am. He was so pleased with your letter and sends no end of messages. I hope you are stronger and that the cure agrees with you. Mr. G. does not seem to have hit it off with Labby altogether ; they seem already in a bad way.

—Yours very sincerely,

Louise Devonshire.

When the House rose in August Mr. Chaplin was in the habit of betaking himself to Homburg or some other fashionable cure, for the serious business of reducing his weight with a view to his autumn and winter activities. When this was accomplished he sometimes accepted an invitation from his friend Count Tassilo Festetics to shoot chamois at Johnsbach in the Styrian Hills. Not infrequently also he was a guest at Eichhorn, the beautiful shooting-lodge in the Hungarian hills belonging to Baron Hirsch, upon whose adopted son the Austrian Emperor later conferred the barony of de Forest. Mr. Chaplin continued his visits to Eichhorn after the Baron's death, and the latter's widow evidently found much support in the advice of so astute a man of the world, and the

¹ Mr. Vincent at this date held the appointment of Governor of the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

kindly interest shown by him in the education of her adopted son Arnold, who was sent to Eton and Oxford. He must have smiled at the ingenuousness of the anxious mother's expressions with regard to the boy's safety.

It is too kind of you inviting Arnold to your charming family party, taking the trouble to write to him that you would take care of him, as I know you will do. I would indeed be grateful if you would help Arnold to get a good *safe* horse. He is a fearless but not an experienced nor well-taught rider, and his great aim is to ride hard and *fast*. I do not mind giving a high price, provided he gets a steady reliable animal. He has an excellent pretty mare which he wants to sell because she does not jump well enough—it is such a pretty and safe animal that it seems a pity not to keep her. Will you tell the Duchess [of Sutherland] how much I appreciate her great kindness in letting you invite Arnold to her beautiful house.

Mr. Chaplin's kindly nature made it always easy for him to give his friends the benefit of his advice and assistance. As life advanced, his urbane manner and dignified presence, combined with a strong sense of fair dealing, made him often in demand as an arbitrator in any social or public predicament. His light-hearted enjoyment of that social circle, of which to the end he was so genial and popular a member, and of those episodes which appealed to his ready sense of humour, shows itself in the few fragments of personal reminiscence which he has left behind him. The following extract from a letter to his daughter, Lady Londonderry, in May 1898, is an example of his constant search for the ludicrous, and his delight in it when it was found :

I had to go to the Drawing-room yesterday as Minister in attendance, which I hated. But my virtue was rewarded by seeing a little old lady, just as she was going to make her obeisance to the Queen, turn turtle in the most delightful manner. I was just opposite her, about five or six yards off. Her feet slipped on part of her train or something. Down she came plump on her back. Her legs flew up into the air facing the Queen. She waved her little arms wildly ; her coronet nearly fell off the back of her head, and whether the Queen or her Minister laughed most, I really can't tell. All I know is I went off into a splutter which I could not help, and Ponsonby and his attendants rushed to pick her up off the floor and put her again on her legs. It was really the most ludicrous incident I think I ever witnessed. Your little friend, Alice Montague, was presented, looking nice, but such a collection of Hidiosities and Frights generally I never set eyes on, and what they went for I have been wondering ever since.

X

Mr. Chaplin lived all his life on terms of close friendship and warm affection with the Royal Family. He constantly entertained and was entertained by King Edward when Prince of Wales ; when Queen Victoria's horses had pink-eye—they were very fat and usually died of over-feeding—his advice proved invaluable ; and his own bereavements and those of the Royal House always brought an interchange of affectionate letters.

A letter to Lady Londonderry describes a talk with Queen Victoria in October 1899 :

BALMORAL,
Friday, Oct. 13/99.

I have never seen so much of the Queen before, or had so much to do with and for her, and never have I seen her

so well, so bright and quick and alert in intellect, about everything that is going on. And never have I had to do with any one with a calmer, quicker, and yet, in my opinion, a wiser judgment on all the questions of exceeding interest which just now come before her. Amidst them all she has found time to repeat her anxiety to see you "either before or after her marriage", and I have told her that she has only to signify her wishes, when it is to be, and that you will be at her disposal at any time except on Nov. 28 and the immediately succeeding days. Her kindness to me is really excessive. I had not been here half an hour, when the Head Stalker came to my room, saying he had her commands to ascertain if I should like to go stalking the following day, which I did. I had a long audience, not often the case I am told, with her this afternoon. And to-night she asked me to stay till the afternoon, as she wishes to see me again to-morrow.

King Edward, then Prince of Wales, wrote to him about the attempt on his life in Brussels in 1900 :

COPENHAGEN,
April 13th, '00.

MY DEAR HARRY—I am most grateful to you for your kind letter of sympathy on the occasion of the narrow escape I experienced at Brussels last week. Luckily the individual was a very indifferent shot, as it is inconceivable that he missed me at two yards ! However, "All's well that ends well". The Princess showed great courage and was none the worse for the incident, so we were enabled to bring our journey to a successful termination. The enormous amount of congratulatory letters and telegrams which we have received has been most gratifying to us. The feeling against England on the Continent is very strong, and that horrible Dr. Leyds has much to answer for in having created such mistrust and Anglophobia in the Foreign Press.

It is very cold here, and there are no signs of spring yet. I shall be turning my head homewards in a week's time. You will, I hope, enjoy some more hunting during the vacation,

and if you happen to be at Badminton when these lines reach you, please offer the Beauforts my sincere congratulations on the birth of their son and heir! Many thanks for all you say about the Grand National. It is a race I was very proud to win. Ambush¹ ran a grand race in spite of the weight he carried. Indeed I hope that Diamond Jubilee may run well for the Derby, but it would be almost too good luck to expect to win it.—Ever yours very sincerely,

ALBERT EDWARD.

When King Edward died, Mr. Chaplin wrote to Queen Alexandra :

STAFFORD HOUSE, ST. JAMES, S.W.

MADAM—In the darkest hour of my life, now nearly 30 years ago, you expressed your sorrow for my loss with such touching sympathy and kindness that it has never left my memory in all the years since then. It is that and the vivid recollection of countless acts of kindness from your dear husband and yourself, extending over many many years, for my first acquaintance with him began when we were both of us at Oxford, that has emboldened me to write this now; and most fervently do I hope that it is not undue intrusion upon my part at a time so sad and for yourself so sacred as the present. And indeed, dear Ma'am, if I may say so, it is with my heart very very full for him, for all who knew and loved him, and above all for yourself, in the crushing blow which has fallen so suddenly on your life, that I have dared to do so. For while I feel and know that I have lost myself, I think, the oldest friend perhaps that I had left, and certainly the kindest that I ever knew (for never once in all these years have I ever known him otherwise), I do not dare to think what it must be to you, and can only pray you may be given strength to bear it.

The following was the Queen's reply :

¹ Ambush II. won the Grand National in 1900 in the Prince's colours. He was six years old, and carried 11 st. 3 lbs. There were 16 runners in the race. The Prince also won the Derby that year with Diamond Jubilee.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
July 7th, 1910.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPLIN—I must write one word myself to one of the King's oldest and best friends to tell you how much I appreciated your most kind sympathy at a moment when my heart was almost broken at the loss of my beloved husband. I hardly know how I lived through it all—the suddenness, the shock, and the agonies of parting—but God helped me, and I try to bear up for the sake of my children. It has indeed been a great consolation to me to know and feel how much and deeply the whole Nation has shared my sorrow and grief and how universally he is regretted by all.

With renewed thanks believe me, yours very sincerely,
ALEXANDRA.

One other letter may be quoted from Queen Alexandra, after the death of the late Duke of Sutherland :

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,
July 4th, 1913.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPLIN—I was so deeply touched by your very kind letter giving me all the latest details of poor dear Strath's end. It is all too sad for words, and I can think of nothing else, and that he, the last of that generation and dear family we all loved so well, should have passed away for ever. How you will miss him for ever in your daily life, he who was so much to you in every sense of the word. I feel most *deeply* for you, and having to leave dear old Stafford House at this moment too—enough to break one's heart. Where are you going to live, and your dear daughter?

I am glad his last resting-place is such a lovely-spot at dear old Dunrobin; yet how I wish we could all have met there once more like in happy old days, now alas, gone for ever. Thank you once more for your most kind touching letter.—Yours most sincerely,

ALEXANDRA.

xi

After the death of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Sutherland, and the subsequent sale of Stafford House, Mr. Chaplin lived in a flat in Charles Street. With increasing age, and presently the advance of the fatal illness, against which he fought so sturdily to the end, the inconveniences of this arrangement began to make themselves felt. His servant William attended him with devoted care, but the effort of getting to and from his clubs was becoming a serious drawback. It especially tried him having to go out to all his meals. "I have a plump young chicken here," he writes on one occasion with some pathos, "and nobody to cook it."

In July 1922 his son-in-law offered him a suite of rooms in Londonderry House, which was very gratefully accepted. Lord Chaplin moved in in the following October, and underwent the severe operation, from which, at his age, there could be no hope of real recovery, in November. On the day of the doctors' final consultation, and after receiving their verdict as to the immediate necessity of the operation, he went straight to the Carlton Club and was indignant, in common with some of his political contemporaries, at being refused admittance, since he was a peer and not in the House of Commons, to the meeting of the Conservative party.

From the first he declined to confess himself defeated. From his bed he followed the political situation with the closest attention. He would not admit that he would probably never be able to hunt again, and clung as long as possible to the hope of finding

himself on horseback once more. He persisted in making light of the operation. Very soon after it was over he wanted to get out of bed, and when Mr. Winston Churchill's docility in bed was quoted against him, he replied airily : "He is quite different. Winston had a really serious operation."

To Lady Londonderry he had written on his seventy-eighth birthday :

December '19.

Bless you, darling, for your letter and the joint telegram. I had another from the King and Queen on my birthday.

According to the Bible given me by my godfather, dated 12th March 1850 (and I did not go to school until I was 9), I am 78. According to Aunt Matty it is 79, but at that age it don't much matter. I was going to Barleythorpe to-day, but I had another chill, made worse by being in the Lords one night until past 12. If it hadn't been for the kindness of G. Curzon, who took me in his motor to the Foreign Office, and telling the chauffeur to return as soon as he put me down at the Carlton, I don't know how I should have got home.

I shall be in poor condition for hunting—I hear they are having much good sport, but are rather short of foxes.

The following letters belong to the last year of his life :

To Lady Londonderry

6 CHARLES STREET, BERKELEY SQUARE, W.,
10th July, 1922.

Yours of the 8th brings with it more happiness than any other letter I have had for a long time. I had heard of shootings at Mount Stewart from the enemy, and a tremendous volley in reply. But now it is possible to hope that that phase of the position is over in your case at Mount Stewart, and that better times are in sight, and that if they could only get hold of de Valera peace would be in sight.

I can't tell you how deeply I have been touched by the kindly and loving thoughts for me and my future home on the part of yourself and dear Charley, nor shall I ever forget it.

I was obliged, and greatly to my regret, to give up the hound sale at Rugby, but Lady Pearson had got the Duke of Connaught to come to a kind of fête at St. Dunstan's and I felt bound to go there. However, Southampton got the pick of the hounds, and they made £2700 altogether. I believe they are bigger than I should quite like, but every one speaks well of them.

I hope I may be able to see them in their work in the Winter. . . . On Wednesday I shall have a sort of Field day in the Lords. I have got first place for a debate on the Canadian Cattle question. I shall have the support of Crewe, and, I presume, of his Liberal following. I hope that my views may be successful, but I am not in much trim for a big speech, and I don't know how it may go.

To Lady Londonderry

TURF CLUB, PICCADILLY,
16th July, /22.

DEAREST CHILD . . . —I was tired, I admit, before the Debate was over, and sitting there so long, but so far from finding difficulties in speaking, all I know is, when I sat down, it was amid loud cheers, and it is very rare for the Lords to greet any one with that kind of reception. As to your letter of the 8th, October will suit me perfectly, or I can make any time suit me. But it will take a little time to move my things in.

I shall be very glad to get away from Charles Street. They do not give me quite the attention I am entitled to, leaving everything to William as much as they can. And it is tiresome to have always to go out to my food.

The Canadian Debate was adjourned, which will give me an excellent opportunity for reply. I could hear very little of it, but now I can read it, and indeed have read most of it already for my reply. They are trying, some of them, to

patch up a compromise—headed by Lord Harris, who knows, I suspect, very little about the subject, and I have got the Board of Agriculture, where I went yesterday, to see two of the chief officials who do know, and who agree entirely with me. I dined with Ernie last night, who is wonderfully well after Bagnolles de L'Ormes, and with Florrie the night before, and next week I dine at Chesterfield House with the Princess who is entertaining.—Always your loving FATHER.

To Lord Londonderry

LONDONDERRY HOUSE, PARK HOUSE,
10th Nov./22.

Curzon has written to me to ask me to dine at his Party Dinner to-morrow, where, I presume, he will speak after dinner to the Party. I have always accepted his invitations and should like to do so now, and it might look strange if I did not go this time, the more so because I think we owe him a great deal for the way he has met the Turk so far. Personally, I think it would be better for me to dine quietly up here, but I will do whatever you like. I am pretty sure to be tired.—Always your affect. SQUIRE.

To Lady Londonderry

(on his return to Londonderry House, after his operation)

LONDONDERRY HOUSE,
Nov. 27/22.

One line, Darling, to tell you that I arrived safely here this morning, soon after midday. A youthful-looking gentleman, but of considerable weight, appeared on the pavement of Park Lane, just opposite my old house which used to be 1 Park Lane, and is now Hamilton Gardens, having just been carried down some rather steep stairs by three men. Having halted again on the landing of Londonderry House, after the first 6 stairs, they ascended the main staircase, and reached the summit about 12.30.

The youthful-looking gentleman was very shortly afterwards landed in the rooms which have been so generously



MR CHAPLIN AT MOUNJ STEWART
after the christening of Lady Londonderry's youngest daughter May, 13th May 1921

provided for him. He sank into Sir Ernest Cassel's chair, while being heard to murmur, "Thank God for all his mercies", and what he said only to himself was exactly what he meant and felt himself. It is three weeks ago last Wednesday since I entered the hospital, and I was operated on the same afternoon. Nothing could exceed the kindness and attention shown me by one and all the hospital authorities, and I shall always have a most kindly recollection of them. I hope your great Belfast Fête went off as well as you expected it to do, and with all my love, I am, more than ever your affect.

FATHER.

To Lord Londonderry

LONDONDERRY HOUSE,
Feb. 22/23.

Will you kindly apologise to their Majesties for my absence to-night and tell them that, although I have recovered a good deal of the strength I had lost in consequence of the operation some weeks ago, the cold of the last few days has told very much against me, and I really did not feel up to the effort of attending the dinner to-night. I hope they will allow Lord Chaplin to make his apologies before they go to-morrow.

I am, now and always, their faithful servant,

CHAPLIN.

III

PUBLIC AFFAIRS. 1868-1923

THE squires of Blankney, after the manner of the English landed gentry of a more prosperous and spacious day, served their lands and, at the same time, their country most effectively by representing the former in Parliament. Mr. Chaplin's uncle and his grandfather before him had represented the county of Lincoln for many years, and the young squire was fully prepared to follow in their footsteps. Already, at his own coming-of-age festivities, at tenants' dinners and similar functions, he had shown that he could express himself, not only suitably, but with that lucidity of thought and fluency of language which, in impressive Victorian orations, were to hold the attention of the House for nearly fifty years and to command the respect even of a younger and more impatient generation.

I

At the General Election of 1868 he entered Parliament without a contest as Conservative member for Mid-Lincolnshire (afterwards known as the Sleaford Division), and continued to hold the seat until 1906, a total of thirty-eight years.

Bred in the traditions of the Bentincks, Mr. Chaplin was a devout follower and admirer of Mr. Disraeli, and became one of his supporters on the back benches of the Opposition. From the first he was a sincere and straightforward politician. His constituents, many of whom were his own tenants, for the farmers' vote in Lincolnshire was a very strong one on the Conservative side, knew that they could trust him to forward their interests. A practical agriculturist himself, though his interest in the matter was mainly political, he thoroughly understood their needs, and was to give nearly the whole of his political life to the object of satisfying them. He may have been said to have been born a Protectionist, and to the end he remained convinced that Tariff Reform was the only measure which could restore a satisfactory means of livelihood to the English farmer.

But it was not on any matter connected with agriculture that his maiden speech was delivered in the House of Commons. On the 29th April 1869 the House had gone into the preliminary committee stage of the Irish Church Bill. It would appear on the surface an unexpected subject for the intervention of a young member whose interests were not ecclesiastical, and whose main connection with Ireland at this date were concerned with the breeding and racing of horses. But he had always a vivid interest in Irish affairs ; Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule policy woke in him the liveliest animosity ; and to the end of his life the difficulties of the loyalists in Ireland were very near to his heart.

On this occasion his sense of justice had been roused by the final and qualifying clause in Mr.

Gladstone's wording of the Bill that "private endowments since 1660 should be preserved to the Church after it is disestablished and disendowed". Mr. Gladstone opposed an amendment to omit the last words with the argument that before 1660 there was no identity between the Churches of England and Ireland. At this point the young member for Mid-Lincoln rose to his feet and asked the indulgence of the committee while he ventured to make a few observations upon the immediate question before them. Up to that time, he said, he had refrained from taking any part in the discussions, because he thought it would have been presumptuous of him to urge his own views as to the expediency of the measure in opposition to honourable gentlemen of such vast experience. But the justice of a measure was quite apart from its expediency, and he thought any person of ordinary intellect, however deficient in political experience, was competent to pronounce an opinion on a question of justice and good faith. "The absence of experience", he continued, "might even be an advantage, for it appeared as if, in some cases, the sense of justice became nearly blunted through a long course of political experience. With all respect to the Right Hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, I maintain that in this Bill, not only is perfect justice not done, but in more than one instance, and notably in this clause, injustice deliberately may be perpetrated."

He went on to remind the committee that if there was one thing more strongly instilled than another into the mind of the country at large by Mr. Gladstone, as one of the principles of the Bill, it was that previous

endowments were to be considered not as gifts to the State, but as gifts to those religious foundations to which in the first instance they had been dedicated ; and that all private endowments were therefore to be scrupulously respected. But it appeared that private endowments, as then spoken of, were totally different from private endowments as now understood by the Prime Minister, which dated, according to him, from 1660—a reservation which the country never contemplated. “ By what process of reason or argument has the Right Hon. Gentleman been able to satisfy himself that private endowments given for the same purpose precisely, and possibly in some instances by the same people, are to be treated as such from and after 1660 and not to be so treated in 1659 ? ”

Mr. Chaplin with considerable learning went on to prove the fallacy of this assertion. He reminded the House that for 300 years, with the exception of the nineteen years, 1615–1634, when the Lambeth Creed was temporarily accepted by the Convocation of that day, the liturgy and articles of the Protestant Churches of England and Ireland were precisely the same.

He then dwelt especially upon the position of the Church in Ulster, recalling to the memory of the House the conditions under which, after the rebellion of certain Irish chiefs in the reign of James I., a large tract of the country, consisting of six counties and 500,000 acres, was escheated to the Crown, and a project of colonisation was conceived by the King. The Commissioners declared that they thought it convenient first to make a deduction from the whole

for the support of the clergy and the Church. The King knew well that security for the enjoyment of their religious worship would be a special inducement to Protestant settlers to come from England and Scotland ; indeed, without some such security it is reasonable to suppose they would never have come to Ulster at all. “ By their energy, peacefulness, and industry they have formed a nucleus of loyalty and attachment to the Crown of this country which has frequently proved a source of strength to the Empire in time of need. And now the Government proposes no longer to fulfil its share of the agreement. It proposes to repudiate its engagement, to break faith with the Protestant people, and to take away from them endowments of which it has no more right to deprive them than of the land itself.”

He finished with an eloquent appeal for honest dealing. “ Let the benefit be what it may in future, I have yet to learn that it is lawful to do evil that good may come. I refuse to subscribe to that doctrine, and I trust the day is far distant when the House of Commons will affirm that justice, however small, must give way to expediency, however great.”

Mr. Chaplin sat down amid enthusiastic cheers from every part of the House. Not only his historical grasp of the question but the finished manner of his delivery had made an excellent impression. He used to say that this favourable reception of his first speech had surprised him very much, but he was a good deal more surprised by what followed. For Mr. Gladstone himself rose to reply, and the young member for Mid-Lincolnshire was so pleased by the compliment thus paid to him that fifty years later he

was able correctly to repeat the opening sentences of the Prime Minister's speech.

The Hon. Member who has just sat down has admonished us, and myself in particular, that the sense of justice is apt to grow dull under the influence of a long Parliamentary experience. But there is one sentiment which I can assure him does not grow dull under the influence of a long Parliamentary experience, and that is the sense of pleasure when I hear an able, and at the same time frank, ingenuous and manly statement of opinion, and one of such a character as to shew me that the man who makes it is a real addition to the intellectual and moral wealth and strength of Parliament.

He then went on in majestic phrases to "thank the honourable member for having sharply challenged us; it is right we should be so challenged and we do not shrink from it".

Meantime, Mr. Chaplin received a compliment which he valued even more.

While Mr. Gladstone was speaking Disraeli turned round and leant across the row which divided us and shook me warmly by the hand and congratulated me on the success of my speech. The next day in the Lobby he put his arm round my shoulder and asked me how I liked my new life. On my expressing my appreciation, "You are right," he said. "Believe me, it is the real thing, and I shall put you into training at once." However, I was young in those days, and I had a great many other interests, especially hounds. Also I had won the Derby the year before, and had many horses in training, so I did not attend the House as regularly as I might have done. I was taken by surprise by an unexpected¹ election, and I was left out by "Dizzy", and quite naturally too. Later in life, however, we became very intimate friends. He asked me to lunch with him frequently at his house

¹ The election of 1874. It was scarcely unexpected; Mr. Disraeli had declined office in 1873, because he knew that his chances would be better in six months' time.

in Whitehall Gardens. "My dear boy," he said, "I never lunch out," and I nearly always found him alone. That was after his wife's death, and he was a very pathetic figure. Shortly before his death he had written to me through Lord Barrington asking me to go to see him. He had heard a disturbing rumour about the Counties. I arranged to go, but Lord Barrington wrote again to say he was not well enough to see me, and then from day to day it was put off. He sent me a message that he would make the earliest possible appointment with me when he was better, but I never saw him again.

Whatever the distractions alien to politics of Mr. Chaplin's early parliamentary days—and there were many—it does not appear that he neglected his constituents. In 1872 we find him, with the advice and assistance of his chairman, Mr. Banks Stanhope,¹ busy preparing the ground with the tenant farmers for the General Election two years later. On this occasion his brother Edward was chosen as candidate for the city of Lincoln, and in 1874, largely owing to the influence of the farmers, with whom he was second in popularity only to the Squire himself, he was elected.

It is clear that Disraeli had by no means forgotten the young member whose first speech had given him such satisfaction, and he was no doubt pleased with his activities in Lincolnshire. In 1873, when, in view of the imminent dissolution, he was concerned for the prospects of a Tory majority "if the lukewarm manner and selfishness of those who have a safe seat prevent contests," he appointed to look into the matter a small committee of men of social influence, among whom he named Henry Chaplin.

¹ Nephew of 4th Earl Stanhope, M.P. for North Lincoln 1852-1868.

In 1875 Lord Beaconsfield, as Prime Minister, had some thoughts of transferring Sir Michael Hicks Beach to the Board of Trade and of sending Mr. Chaplin to succeed him as Secretary to Ireland, but decided that he was not sufficiently experienced for "that nest of corruption, intrigue, and trickery". Throughout the session of that year Mr. Chaplin, who, owing to his personal popularity and to his undoubted abilities, had now gained a considerable political reputation, was much occupied with the Agricultural Holdings Bill, and in close attendance at the House with a view to getting certain amendments carried. In July Lord Beaconsfield was making a great fight for the Merchant Shipping Bill in face of the agitation against it led by Mr. Samuel Plimsoll,¹ who did not consider it sufficiently humanitarian. Beaconsfield described Plimsoll as the "Moody and Sankey of politics, half rogue and half enthusiast", whereas Sir William Harcourt valued him as "the enlightened advocate of the merchant seamen", and on his retirement from the House in 1880 Harcourt received from him as a legacy the care of the seamen's interests.²

It was nearly the end of the session, and the Cabinet had hoped to drop the Shipping Bill, the second reading of which had been carried after much difficulty in April, and proceed with the Agricultural Holdings Bill. Plimsoll's sensational opposition, how-

¹ Samuel Plimsoll, 1824-98, Radical M.P. for Derby 1868-80, was known as "The Sailors' Friend", originator of the "Plimsoll line" on cargo boats, and President of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, 1890.

² Mr. Plimsoll handed over his seat at Derby to Sir W. Harcourt, when the latter had been defeated at Oxford in attempting re-election after his appointment as Home Secretary in the administration of 1880.

ever, made this impossible. Writing to Lady Bradford on July 28, Lord Beaconsfield says : "All I have got to look to are my friends, but does friendship exist in August ?" Mr. Chaplin was to prove that it did. He had no intention of deserting his leader because the seamen were usurping the place of his agriculturists, and in turning his back upon the Brighton, he could scarcely have made a greater sacrifice in the cause of friendship. That it was appreciated is evident from a letter of the Prime Minister written to Lady Bradford on the 30th.

The campaign opened unfortunately for the foe. They tried to stop public business and failed ignominiously. Adam, the Whig Whip, who is a gentleman, told Dyke that the Plimsoll business was a "flash in the pan". They did not think so 8 and 40 hours ago. Then after the failure I got into Committee on my Bill and absolutely at one o'ck concluded it amid loud cheers. I never had more continuous and greater majorities than throughout this Bill. I am very glad Harry C. was not at Goodwood. He has never left my side and his aid has been invaluable. He is a natural orator and a debater too. He is the best speaker in the House of Commons, or will be. Mark my words. I have a Cabinet at noon, the H. of C. at two, when we have the second reading of our Ship Bill. I should not be surprised if it passed without a division. The Battle of Armageddon, however, will be on Monday, when in committee they will try to substitute Plimsolliana for our proposals. I am sending all over the world for votes. Chaplin has a house full for Brighton races, but remains here. *O, si sic omnia!* or rather *omnes*!¹

They "pulled through", as Lord Beaconsfield expressed it later, but not triumphantly. The original of this letter was, many years later, lent to Mr. Chaplin

¹ See *Life of Disraeli*, v. p. 387.

by Lady Beatrice Pretyman, the daughter of Lady Bradford, and a copy of it, with its tribute to the young member's abilities and loyalty, remained one of his dearest possessions to the end of his life.

In the following year, 1876, he was able once more to come to the aid of his leader. The Royal Titles Bill, to confer the title of Empress of India upon Queen Victoria, roused a factious opposition led by Mr. Gladstone. Lord Beaconsfield wrote to Lady Bradford on March 13: "Gladstone is quite mad, and I have no doubt that by next Thursday he will have prepared blowing-up materials equal to Guy Faux. I understand it to be something dreadful, but my friends are firm, and Henry Chaplin is going to give us a speech out of love for me and hatred of G."¹

II

Mr. Chaplin's political activities during the next four years will be found recorded in his letters to his wife.²

When Parliament was dissolved in March 1880, neither the Conservative party³ nor the country as a whole was prepared for the catastrophic defeat which followed. Mr. Gladstone for the last year had left no stone unturned in preaching to the electorate the wrong-headedness and immorality of Lord Beaconsfield's policy at home and abroad. Lord Roberts's

¹ *Life of Disraeli*, v. p. 467.

² See Chapter II.

³ Lord Beaconsfield seems to have had his doubts. When Hart-Dyke once asked him with what cry he meant to go to the country, his answer was: "You need not trouble yourself about that. The only cry that ever interests the people is 'that d---d Government'."

success in Afghanistan, the passing of Irish relief legislation and important measures of social reform, and the fact that Great Britain's interests had everywhere been safeguarded with only a slight increase of taxation, were without significance before the fiery eloquence of the member for Midlothian.

While Liberal activity all over the country was unprecedented, the Conservative party organisation had certainly declined, and Lord Beaconsfield was less in touch with party and popular feeling since he had ceased to be the leader in the House of Commons, and the Conservative Central Office, of which Mr. Gorst was no longer the chief, appears to have been ignorant of the drift of the electorate. Moreover, the principle of non-interference with the local associations affiliated to the National Union had not been adhered to, and the local leaders had been alienated and offended by infringement of their privileges. The farmers, weary of bad harvests and what they considered the inertia of the Conservative Government, felt that any change might be to their advantage.

Mid-Lincolnshire, however, proved to be not ungrateful. Mr. Chaplin was returned unopposed, but, to his great chagrin, his brother Edward was defeated in the city of Lincoln. Lord Beaconsfield resigned on April 21, and when the new Parliament met on May 20, Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister.

It is not to be supposed that so staunch a Tory as Mr. Chaplin, and one who was always an upholder of law and order in the House, would view with favour the formation of the Fourth Party, which arose during this Parliament as the outcome of dissatisfaction with the leadership of Sir Stafford Northcote. This band

of free lances, consisting of Mr. Gorst, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, and, to a lesser extent, of Mr. Arthur Balfour, with Lord Randolph Churchill as the leading spirit, was regarded with some tolerance by Lord Beaconsfield, who appreciated their energy while he begged them ineffectually to remain faithful to the appointed leader. No doubt Lord Randolph's audacious militancy, which spared neither of the front benches, was useful as a further irritant to the Government, hampered at the outset by Mr. Bradlaugh's defiance, and, presently, to be faced by the fulfilment of Lord Beaconsfield's prophecies—Ireland in turmoil, the Transvaal in revolt, and England losing her prestige among the continental powers.

In this complete reversal of previous policy Mr. Chaplin, as a member of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, found himself fully occupied with resisting the efforts of the Radicals to set up peasant proprietors in place of landlords, and with trying to procure modifications in the Agricultural Holdings Act. Whatever his views of Lord Randolph's political escapades, they were not at present so acute as to interfere with a social and personal friendship, and in the autumn of 1880 we find him undertaking to go to speak at a tenants' dinner at Blenheim. Lord Randolph writes him a characteristic letter on his acceptance of the invitation.

BLENHEIM PALACE,
Oct. 30th.

It is very good of you not minding the trouble of attending the dinner here. And, as I said before, agriculture is the very subject on which the farmers will be eager to hear you. Wolff and Gorst have been here the past week, and, as you may imagine, we have had much conversation on

political matters. . . . As to the Goat's¹ speeches, which he has been making in propagation of the gospel of literary institutes and education, they are simply nauseating, and quite unworthy of the leader of the Tory Party, who ought to leave such trifles to others.

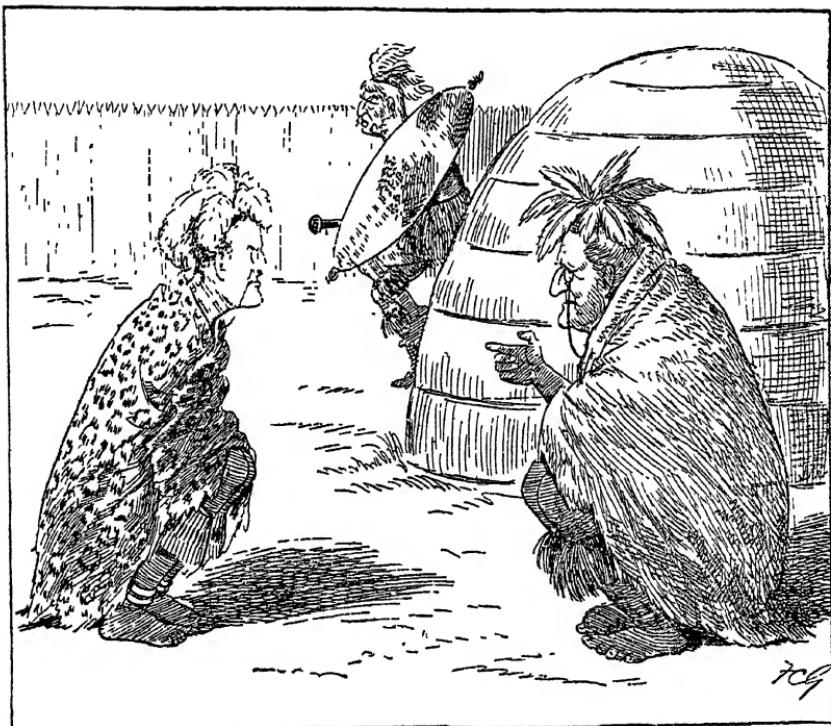
I quite agree with your opinion as to the Irish landlords being ready to swallow anything that they may think will secure them some portion of their property. That was my distinct impression in Ireland, and I was shocked at the glib way in which people talked of conferring tenants' rights on all farmers throughout Ireland. The policy of the Fourth Party is a *non possumus* attitude on the Land Question in Ireland, on any alterations in the rules of the House or on the County Franchise Question, and if Northcote shews any weakness in these matters, he had better mind his eye.

I fear Lord Beaconsfield is very unwell, and before long the Tory Party may have to choose a leader. The Fourth Party are thoroughly in favour of Lord Salisbury as opposed to the Goat. What do you think on the matter? It is not unwise to be prepared for eventualities. I really think the future is full of hope and the difficulties of the Government in the East and West are becoming serious. I really think, if possible, your Commission ought to publish a special report on Ireland. If they do not, I fear that legislation may be attempted before your whole report is ready. The Fourth Party will have a demonstration at Portsmouth on the 18th, and you will meet the whole lot when you come here, also several others you know well.

Lord Beaconsfield's health was failing, and the year 1881, which was to bring Henry Chaplin the tragic end of his own domestic happiness, was also to see the death of his admired leader. The year opened badly for England with news of the defeat at Majuba Hill in February, the first-fruits of the Liberal policy in South Africa. Lord Beaconsfield was able to

¹ Sir Stafford Northcote (Earl of Idesleigh).

IN SWAZILAND.



FIRST SWAZI *We must get rid of this Government—they have failed to manage the wheat crop this year.*

[According to the annual report of the Resident Commissioner of Swaziland, the Chief Regent has suffered in popularity during the year owing to her failure to manage the rainfall.]

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denounce the Government with his usual vigour in the debate on the Address, and in March, after a bout of illness, he resumed his activities in the House of Lords. But they were not to endure for long, and his last serious speech was made in the debate on Kandahar. Meantime he seems to have found his chief relaxation in dining out, and in one of his letters to Lady Bradford he mentions a dinner at Lady Lonsdale's which he had found amusing, and at which the Henry Chaplins had been of the company, as well as Louise, Duchess of Manchester, "Harty" (Lord Hartington), the Cadogans, and Sir Charles Dilke, "all very good company and talked well". It was probably the last time that Mr. Chaplin met his old chief in society, for by the end of March Lord Beaconsfield was stricken with his final illness. After his death, on April 19, Lord Salisbury became the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords, and Sir Stafford Northcote in the House of Commons.

The session was a long one, largely occupied in the House of Commons with the Irish troubles, the passing of the Crimes Act having created perpetual obstruction by the followers of Parnell and considerably strengthened the Land League. When it was over, Mr. Chaplin was further detained by a bye-election in North Lincolnshire, where he was supporting the candidature of Mr. James Lowther. Lady Florence, who could not share in his activities on this occasion, went off with her two children to Dunrobin in August, her husband being unable to follow her until three weeks later. In the General Election Mr. Lowther had lost his seat at York, which he had held for fifteen years, and the return of the Liberals to

power had relieved him of his office as Chief Secretary in Ireland.¹

The letter which Mr. Chaplin wrote to his wife from Blankney describing his campaign is characteristic of his sanguine and confident nature, as well as of his tremendous energy.

I have just got home after a terrific day's work between one and two in the morning, but I must write you one line before I go to bed that it may go by the early post. I have been all over North Lincolnshire to-day and spoken at five different places, winding up between nine and ten at night to an extremely radical audience of at least 500 at Barton on the Humber, only just separated from Yorkshire by the river. They began by threatening almost a riot, but they ended by listening so that you might have heard a pin drop, as the saying is. Our progress everywhere has been triumphant, the Scarborough tenantry working for us like trumps, and five of them have been going round with us nearly all the day, one of them organising a meeting just outside the Park, and I do believe I could have carried Ted or almost any one with a sweep. However, we mustn't hulloo yet, but it certainly has been most gratifying, and repays to some extent the sacrifices I have made. My impression is that we shall win by a very large majority, and that this will be an historical election and create no small sensation through the country. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday I shall be hard at work all day, and then vote at Louth, and after voting, take Jim Lowther to Grimsby, the very hot-bed of the enemy, till the poll is over. And then to the Highlands, where my heart is with you now. Good night, my darling, God bless you. I am *very very* tired, but I thought you would like to hear how we are getting on, and it will be only half a triumph, no real triumph however much we win by, unless you share it with me.

¹ Mr. Lowther was famous for his audacious wit. He once on the platform answered an inconvenient question on Irish affairs by telling his questioner not to talk shop !

Mr. Lowther won the seat, though he was to lose it again in the defeat of the "Fair Trade" party in 1885. From the letter which he wrote to thank Mr. Chaplin for his help, it appears that they had been able to preach the gospel of Protection to their satisfaction, a policy equally dear to both of them. It is the first reference in Mr. Chaplin's correspondence to the campaign in which he was presently to take so vigorous a part.

WILTON CASTLE, REDCAR,
Sept. 7.

MY DEAR HARRY—Many thanks, old chap, for all your kindness throughout this happily most successful business. We are now at the head of a great political movement, which, if I don't strangely mistake the signs of the times, is destined to exercise a vast influence upon the immediate future of this country. The weak-kneed division must be encouraged to move on with us or be content to stay behind. I went to back up Bulwer¹ at Newmarket, where Protection went down A1 under very thin disguise. Let me know when you come south again, as we must have some talk over the Autumn campaign which ought to be followed up with vigour.

Believe me, yours very truly, JAMES LOWTHER.

III

After his wife's death in 1881 Mr. Chaplin threw himself more whole-heartedly than ever into public life, and soon became a figure of note in the front rank of Conservative politics. Warm-hearted and generous as he was, though he had the courage of his convictions and could prove himself a stern antagonist, he never failed in justice and courtesy towards his opponents.

¹ Mr. J. R. Bulwer, Q.C., who on the resignation of Mr. Rodwell, Q.C., was returned unopposed for Cambridgeshire.

Though in his earliest days he had had the courage to attack the Grand Old Man himself from the floor of the House, to the last he retained Mr. Gladstone's esteem and friendship. He used to tell with glee how, when he was once staying at Eaton, the Westminsters proposed to take him with them on a visit to Hawarden, but one of Mr. Gladstone's family suggested that he might not be a *persona grata*, and how indignant Mr. Gladstone was, declaring that Mr. Chaplin was the man of all others he would like to see.

As a devout follower and admirer of Disraeli, a long line of Conservative leaders came to look on him as their most constant support. In every great issue that marked the passage of the latter half of the nineteenth century and in the war agony of the second decade of the twentieth he bore his part. Of no outstanding brilliance, he owed his power to his fixed sincerity of purpose. His winning personality made him friends even among his political enemies, and his kindness of heart gained him affection not only from his constituents, but from a wide circle of the British public, who saw in him a statesman of single aims and a human being whom they could understand and admire. Nor should it be forgotten that he had in his own way remarkable oratorical gifts. It was not only an agricultural meeting that listened to him with attention. He had the "grand manner" in speaking and an air of well-bred sincerity which were extraordinarily attractive to audiences who had never met quite the like before. His daughter well remembers meetings where he was received with condescension, and listened to in a spell-bound silence which ended in a thunderous ovation.

Mr. Chaplin had always the virtue of political magnanimity. One of the most remarkable speeches in the great debate in 1886 on Gladstone's Home Rule Bill was made by Lord Hartington. It astonished friend and foe alike. Chaplin wrote at once to congratulate Hartington "on the best speech I have ever heard you make by ten to one, and the most statesmanlike I have ever heard made by any one in Parliament. It may be a drawback in your eyes that, if it has half the effect on the country that it has had here, it will make you Prime Minister for certain." After the Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons on Britain's entrance into the War of 1914, he told Mrs. Asquith that "no finer speech had been made since the days of Burke and the younger Pitt". In his generosity he was always disposed to exaggerate the merits of his political opponents.

As we have seen, in the disaster that befell the Conservative Government in 1880, Mr. Chaplin retained his seat for Mid-Lincolnshire, a constituency which, after the Redistribution Act of 1885, became known as the Sleaford Division. During Lord Salisbury's short administration in 1885 he held office as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In 1886, when Gladstone met disaster over his Home Rule for Ireland policy and the Conservatives again came into power, Mr. Chaplin was offered the same post, which involved responsibility for the Department of Agriculture; but as this did not then carry with it a seat in the Cabinet, he felt himself unable to undertake the office. In this connection it is interesting to read the correspondence that passed between him and Lord Ran-

dolph Churchill, who then became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the Commons. Each letter is characteristic of its writer, and the incident shows Mr. Chaplin's mild reasonableness even under provocation, for it had been rumoured that it was largely owing to Lord Randolph's hostility that the Prime Minister had decided not to include Mr. Chaplin in his Cabinet. It was inevitable that two men of such different temperaments should rarely see eye to eye, and before this Mr. Chaplin and Lord Randolph Churchill had had more than one stormy passage at arms.

Lord Randolph writes in a tone of virtuous complacency :

WADHURST PARK,
WADHURST, SUSSEX,
1st August 1886.

MY DEAR HARRY CHAPLIN—I am indeed much distressed to learn from yourself of your very rapid decision not to join the Government. I was in hopes that you would, at any rate, have deliberated with your friends, and especially with myself, before coming to a conclusion which is not calculated to strengthen Lord Salisbury's position. I think I could have placed the matter before you in several lights which might have induced you to modify your intentions. I now very earnestly appeal to you not to follow up this action by absenting yourself from the House of Commons during the coming session. This would have a most unfortunate effect and give rise to all sorts of deplorable remarks, which would set a lamentable example to the new and younger members, and when I consider what sort of times may be ahead, it does not appear to me to be consistent with the ordinary notions of patriotism, to say nothing of party considerations.

All I can add is that Beach and Smith and I have told Lord Salisbury from the first that we placed ourselves in his hands to go anywhere, to do anything or to do nothing, just

as he might decide would be most convenient, and in all that has taken place we had but one object, to mitigate so far as we could the difficulties which Lord Salisbury might find in forming his Government. I cannot help thinking that it is much to be regretted, and is hardly of good omen for the future, that this spirit has not been more prevalent in our party ranks.—Yours ever,

RANDOLPH S. C.

Mr. Chaplin's reply is a model of good-natured forbearance :

22, RYDER STREET,
ST. JAMES'S, S.W.

MY DEAR RANDOLPH—I have your letter, or rather lecture, of yesterday. Unfortunately you were out of town yourself, and it was impossible for me to see you, because I did not see Lord Salisbury till 8.30 at night, and he told me very naturally that he wanted my decision by the following morning. I was not aware when I saw him that he had any unusual difficulties in the formation of a Government, for I had seen no one, and he did not impart it to me. After what you told me on Monday I had of course considered my own position, and putting aside all consideration of claims—which I had no desire to press unduly at this time—my conclusion was not hurriedly arrived at, and as to patriotic or party considerations, I really do not see in what way my course differs from your own or that of the colleagues whom you name.

What I have done has been simply to decline an office outside of the Cabinet, the duties of which I do not see my way to fulfil satisfactorily without it, and if that is impossible, I am quite content to stand outside altogether. The experience of last session taught me this, and the prospect of the difficult questions, which I assume are impending in connection with that office, confirm me in that opinion. Would you have done otherwise, or would you have taken that office out of the Cabinet yourself ? If not, I fail to see the justice of your complaint against myself.

As to the session you quite misunderstand me. I have not the slightest intention of absenting myself for the purpose

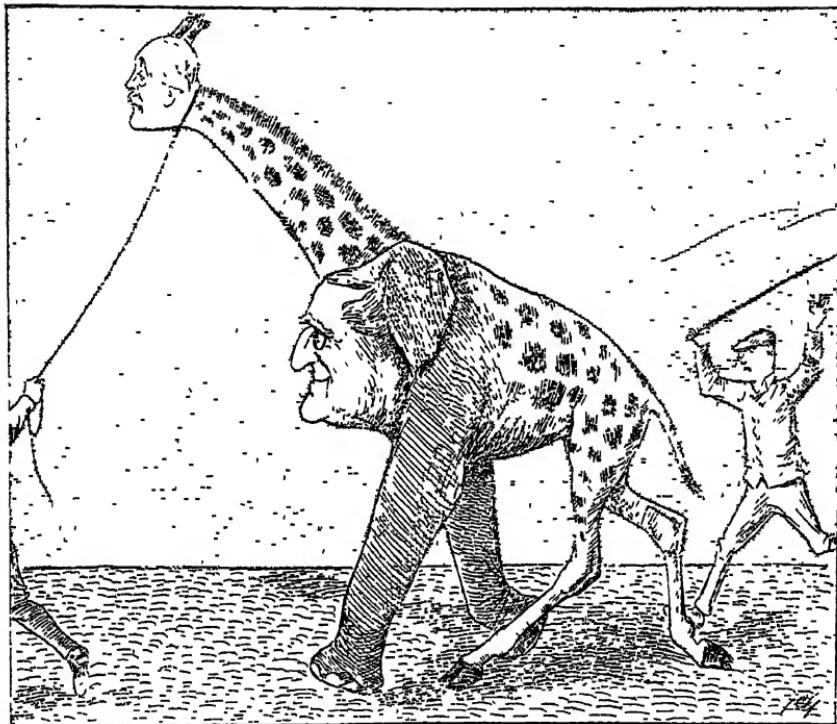
of abstention. But, joking apart, I am really very seedy with suppressed gout, and I am warned for the second time not to delay remedies too long. I would stay at all hazards for a great necessity, and I will try and stay at all events for the address, but I think that is as much as you can ask. I have never recovered from the effects of the last two elections, and if you had done all the work I did in the last one, instead of resting in Norway, you would have more sympathy for my aspirations for Carlsbad than apparently you have.—Ever yours,

HARRY CHAPLIN.

In 1889, however, Lord Salisbury felt himself compelled to enlarge his Cabinet and admitted Mr. Chaplin as President of the newly-formed Ministry of Agriculture. The creation of this new office was to some extent due to the growing political activity of the agricultural labourers. Both great parties were acutely conscious of the importance of this class in the electorate, and for some years they vied with one another in their attentions to it. Mr. Gladstone had been ready to promise parish councils and allotments ; the Unionists were not long behind him in their offer of small holdings and old age pensions. But apart from party and political considerations Mr. Chaplin, brought up as he was in the squirearchical tradition, had a hereditary feeling for the well-being of his tenantry and a keen understanding of agricultural conditions and requirements.

At this time the country was suffering under a widespread agricultural depression so serious that a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into its causes. Of this Commission Mr. Chaplin was an enthusiastic and hard-working member. In its final report the Commission stated its belief that a constant and progressive fall in prices and an excessive foreign

THE UNKNOWN ANIMAL.



The following advertisement appeared in the *Times* of Thursday, April 30

Aldridge's, St Martin's-lane

THE UNKNOWN ANIMAL —*Vide* Press notices

Messrs FREEMAN have received instructions to SELL, absolutely without reserve, on Saturday, May 2nd, at 2 o'clock The ANIMAL will be ON VIEW DURING SALE Catalogue from Auctioneers

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competition lay at the root of the agricultural depression. It declared, moreover, that prices had been artificially forced down by monetary changes and the recent adoption of the gold standard to the detriment of silver. It warmly recommended to Her Majesty's Government an international conference to consider a return to the bimetallic standard in exchanges. Mr. Chaplin believed with all his heart in the bimetallic "cure", and indeed declared it to be "of superlative importance to all workers and producers and to all productive industry". Undaunted by the economic subtleties of this very difficult question, he preached his doctrine with unfailing perseverance, and on more than one occasion he was congratulated by his opponents on his clear and able exposition of his pet theory. But there is an amusing reminiscence of Mr. Chaplin, after a two hours' speech in the House, mopping his brow and asking Mr. Balfour, his friend and leader, "How did I do, Arthur?" "Splendidly, Harry, splendidly." "Did you understand me, Arthur?" "Not a word, Harry, not a word."

Mr. Chaplin's inclusion in the Cabinet of 1889 as Minister of Agriculture necessitated a bye-election in his constituency, and a campaign ensued that was memorable for the Squire's untiring energy. With his friend Weston Jarvis¹ he used to set out of an evening in a brougham to address two and three meetings in outlying villages, accompanied by a hamper containing a bottle and a pint of Pommery '74. They drove incredible distances, and the Squire was apt to finish the champagne absentmindedly. On one occasion they had had their usual three meetings and

¹ He was member for King's Lynn, 1886-1892.

finished up at Swineshead, at some distance from Blankney. There was very little time for him to make a speech before the last train left, and on the instant Mr. Chaplin made up his mind to lose the train and drive home. After he had been speaking for about five minutes the agent, who knew nothing of this plan, tugged him by the coat-tails and whispered, "Only five more minutes, Squire." Mr. Chaplin, hearing perfectly, turned round and said in a loud voice, "What?" "Only five more minutes, Squire—the train," murmured the harassed agent. With a grand gesture Mr. Chaplin turned to the audience. "I ask you," he said, "was ever candidate for your suffrages placed in such a position as I am? I come here, a long way from Blankney, at considerable personal inconvenience and at still greater inconvenience to you good people who have been kind enough to come and listen to me. After I have addressed you for no more than a few minutes this tyrant of a man, who is responsible for arranging my meetings, peremptorily tells me that I must sit down after addressing you for five more minutes. I refuse to be dictated to by anybody on this subject, and if you are willing to listen to me I shall continue to address you not only for five minutes, but for fifteen, twenty-five, thirty-five, or forty-five minutes longer, even if I have to walk back to Blankney barefoot." The applause was overwhelming, and the delighted but still mystified agent shouted, "Well done, Squire, well done." But his warmest friend could not forbear a smile at the thought of the Squire trudging back barefoot to Blankney!

The two-horse "fly" was a vehicle which deserved

to be immortalised—never off the road, covering distances which in these days of motors seem trivial, but in 1889 were tremendous, the coachman on high occasions usually drunk, garbed in rose-pink calico, his tall hat also in rose-pink and his whip festooned with the same!

It was by such human and humorous touches that Mr. Chaplin won over his audiences wherever he went and made himself the idol of the countryside. With agricultural labourers, above all, he enjoyed a lifelong popularity. He had their interests so warmly at heart, he explained everything to them so clearly and with such perfect tact, that he made each one of them believe himself responsible for the result of an election and the welfare of the world.

When Lord Salisbury formed his third administration in 1895 Mr. Chaplin became President of the Local Government Board. During his term of office he introduced, among other measures, the Agricultural Rating Bill, around which for long there raged a storm of debate. All the big guns of Liberal oratory were levelled against it, and during the second reading the atmosphere became so heated that Mr. Lloyd George and four other members were suspended from the House. Sir William Harcourt, who before this, during the passing of his Budget of 1894, had found Mr. Chaplin a formidable opponent, brought against the Bill all the weight of his remarkable oratory. But in spite of acrimonious discussions the Bill became law, and Mr. Chaplin did not sever his friendly relations with his opponents. This is delightfully illustrated by a passage from Mr. Gardiner's biography of Sir William Harcourt :

His [Harcourt's] merciless handling of Mr. Chaplin during the passage of the Agricultural Rating Act did not interrupt his relations with his rival heavyweight, with whom he kept up a comparison of magnitudes. Mr. Chaplin about this time [1896] succeeded in bringing down his weight from eighteen to sixteen stones, and Harcourt, who had always prided himself on being a stone lighter than his rival, went into training, gave up milk, sugar, bread, and other fattening foods, and brought his own weight down substantially. Finally the two agreed to a "compromise" by which they were each to remain as near sixteen and a half stones as possible and ignore the caricaturists, who, as Mr. Chaplin complained, always made him appear the fatter, no matter what weight he took off.

After the "khaki election" of 1900, when Lord Salisbury reconstructed his Cabinet, Mr. Chaplin, with Lord Goschen, Lord Cross, and Sir Matthew Ridley, stood aside to make room for fresh blood. He was not offered and did not seek another place. The Prime Minister proposed to recommend him for a peerage, but after due consideration Mr. Chaplin decided to decline this honour. On his retirement from office the letters he received from his many friends all expressed their regard and affection for him. Lord Salisbury himself wrote:

THE FOREIGN OFFICE,
Nov. 5, 1900.

MY DEAR CHAPLIN—I am very much obliged to you for your letter this morning. It is conceived in the kindly and considerate spirit which has distinguished all your political dealings and especially your bearing to your colleagues. . . . I regret very much that it is concerned with a severance in that relation for a time.—Yours truly, SALISBURY.

As a matter of fact Lord Salisbury's decision to reconstruct his Cabinet had placed Mr. Chaplin in

THE RETURN OF THE DODO.



(With apologies to "Alice")

"*You have come back,*" Alice exclaimed in surprise "*I thought you were extinct!*"

"*Extinct,*" said the Dodo indignantly, "*I am much more modern than you are*"

"*How do you spell Protection?*" the Dodo continued, looking sternly at Alice

"*P-r-e-f-e-r-e-n-c-e,*" replied Alice

"*Quite right,*" said the Dodo, smiling "*I see you have been to school whilst I have been away*"

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rather an awkward position. This he explains fully in a letter to Mr. Reeve-King, Chairman of the Sleaford Conservative Association, a letter which is so characteristic of the writer that it is worth quoting in full :

STAFFORD HOUSE, S.W.,
Nov. 30, 1900.

MY DEAR REEVE-KING—I have received your letter of the 27th. It is couched in terms for which I warmly thank you ; and I beg you will convey to the many friends on whose behalf you write how greatly I am touched by the generous and kindly sentiments which they express towards me.

I cannot say with truth that I am surprised at much you tell me in your letter, for the announcement of my resignation immediately after the election was wholly inconsistent with almost everything that I had said in the election addresses you refer to, and which you are aware I made at more than 40 meetings in the different Lincolnshire constituencies during the campaign. . . . When you tell me, therefore, that it has taken my supporters completely by surprise, and that "it was believed I was prepared to continue my work in Parliament on your behalf, and as a member of the Government to support the interests with which I have been so long connected ", I can perfectly understand it, for undoubtedly those were the intentions which I repeatedly expressed ; and I confess I think that some explanation is due both to them and yourself for this sudden and apparent change on my part.

Very briefly, it is this :

A few days after the elections were over I received a communication from the Prime Minister, in which for the first time he acquainted me with his intention to reconstruct the Government.

Whether this decision was the result of matured consideration or the sudden inspiration of the moment after the elections were completed, I am not aware. But at the same

time he informed me that for the purposes of the reconstruction which he contemplated the surrender of the office which I held and my retirement from the Government would be essential, "not because the existing tenant of the office was condemned", but chiefly, as I gathered, because of the necessity of "creating vacancies for others, which could only be provided by some resignations". Upon the wisdom of that course it was of course for the Minister primarily responsible for the Government of the country—not for an individual member of the Cabinet—to judge, and although by refusing to resign it is conceivable that I might have remained a member of the Government, and although in some quarters I was urged to do this, I believe you will agree that the more dignified and proper course was that which I adopted—to tender my resignation.

At the same time, I felt that it would be impossible for me or any one to reconcile the statements I had made during the election with my immediate resignation the moment it was over. I stipulated, therefore, in resigning, after stating my position, for permission to explain the circumstances under which it had been made, if I should think it right or necessary to do so at any time.

Such an explanation, I consider, is called for by the letter and resolution which I have received from you. And now that it is before you, I trust that my decision in a position, of some difficulty, and so far as I know without precedent, will commend itself to the judgment of my friends.

With regard to the representation of the Sleaford Division and the rumours of my intention to resign my seat, they are not unnatural under the circumstances. They may also be connected with an offer which the Prime Minister was good enough to make me, and which would necessitate that course, were I to accept it.

But I am well aware of what you tell me—the gravity of the agricultural outlook for too many of my constituents in the present season, which has so disastrously affected many districts in the county, and I feel that I should ill requite the never-failing kindness they have shown me for so many

years if I declined to respond to the earnest appeal which is made to me through you.

Under these circumstances I cannot refuse to accede to their request, and I will ask you to make it known to my constituents at Sleaford, in reply to the resolution which they sent me, that for the present, at all events, I shall be proud to continue to the best of my ability to represent their division in the House of Commons.—I am, yours very truly,

HENRY CHAPLIN.

But in spite of friendly relations maintained between Mr. Chaplin and his constituents, in the General Election of 1906, when the safest seats went down before the impetus of the great Liberal revival, even thirty-eight years' unbroken service failed to win security and the Sleaford Division returned a Liberal member to Parliament. Mr. Chaplin's memory, however, remained green in the hearts of his old constituents, and as a token of its remembrance the Sleaford Division presented him with his portrait and an address expressing its appreciation of his services, "particularly towards the advancement of agriculture, the beneficial results of which are recognized throughout the whole of the United Kingdom".

IV

In 1907, a few months after his defeat at Sleaford, Mr. Chaplin was asked to stand as Conservative candidate in the bye-election which came about in the Wimbledon Division owing to the retirement of its member, Mr. Hambro. Wimbledon was as safe a seat as any in the country. It had never wavered in its Tory allegiance, and even in the dark days of 1906 it had been held for the Conservative party by a

majority of more than two thousand. Mr. Chaplin was opposed by the Hon. Bertrand Russell, who was supported by the Radical organisation of the division and fought under the standard of Women's Suffrage. But this was a cause that had not as yet acquired any very great importance. Mr. Chaplin himself dismissed the question by saying that "he might be very old-fashioned, but he drew the line at that". His fighting speeches were based on the matters that lay nearest his heart—the agricultural interests of the country ; the unity of the Empire, and particularly the maintenance of the union between Britain and Ireland ; above all, Tariff Reform and Imperial Preference. The result was a foregone conclusion, and Mr. Chaplin was returned to Parliament as member for Wimbledon with a majority of nearly seven thousand votes. Sir Joseph Lawrence writes to congratulate him :

It was largely a personal victory—your own magnetic personality, your popularity and your well-known devotion to a cause that experience is daily teaching men lies close to the heart of the British people—were all at the foundation of your great victory.

Every item of news that reaches me convinces me that if all who were anxious to vote for you could have been brought to the poll you would have had an eight thousand majority.

The second Wimbledon election, which came when Parliament dissolved at the end of 1909, proved a more equal contest. The Radical candidate was Mr. (later Sir) Arthur Holland, a resident in the constituency and a former mayor of Wimbledon, the very strongest man that his party could have put in the field. Mr. Chaplin threw himself into the campaign with energy and enthusiasm. His election address

stressed the crying need for National Defence—a matter on which Lord Roberts and Lord Charles Beresford had before this enlisted his sympathy and help—and reiterated the old call for Tariff Reform and Colonial Preference. On one occasion his meeting was broken up by an organised gang, and Mr. Chaplin and his younger daughter barely escaped being mobbed. But it was not the first time, he said, that he had been in “a bit of a rough-and-tumble”, and he fought the remainder of a strenuous campaign with a characteristic courage, more than earning the resulting majority of some five thousand odd.

Mr. Chaplin was not called upon to fight again. The year 1910 closed as it had opened, with a general election, but Mr. Holland, owing to reasons of health, was unable to contest the seat and no other opponent came forward. Mr. Chaplin therefore continued to represent the Wimbledon Division in the House of Commons until his elevation to the Peerage in 1916.

During this first decade of the new century, when party and political enthusiasm ran high, Mr. Chaplin proved himself to be a pillar of strength to his Conservative colleagues. He was a recognised authority on all agricultural matters and gave invaluable service as a member of the Royal Commissions on Housing, on Food in Time of War, on Horse Breeding and other questions that had a close connection with the land. He was also President of the Old Age Pensions Committee.

In 1908, when Mr. Joseph Chamberlain raised the battle-cry of Tariff Reform, it must have seemed to

Mr. Chaplin that the hour he had waited for all his life had come at last. Brought up in a county where wheat had at one time been grown on a large scale and where prosperity had decayed under Free Trade and the new fiscal system, Mr. Chaplin had all along been an ardent Tariff Reformer. For years he had preached the doctrine of protection for agriculture to unheeding ears and empty benches. "Fair Trade" with "Bimetallism" had been his infallible cure for all agricultural ills, and he had earned for himself the title of the "Veteran Protectionist". Now he found that in a night his old text had become the issue of the hour and the creed of his party.¹

Mr. Chamberlain first outlined his plans for a preferential tariff at Birmingham in the summer of

¹ The following is an extract from an article in the *National Review* of July 1923 :

"In the great schism of 1903 he was whole-hearted in his attachment to Mr. Chamberlain. A Protectionist by conviction, he accepted the full policy of Tariff Reform. He was not of those who dallied with it or explained it away by evasive sophistry or the refinement of mystifying arguments. He stood up to the public meeting and confessed his unshaking faith. And, indeed, he was no mean advocate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had removed the registration duty on corn, and on May 15, 1903, Chaplin led an influential deputation of protest into the august presence of the First Minister for the Crown. The room was crowded. The Minister was supported by the leading officials of the Treasury and its dependent departments. Even the Permanent Secretary of the great office was in attendance. He, as Gamaliel with the broad phylacteries of party economics upon his forehead, was then devoting his official hours to the instruction of Mr. Winston Churchill in the elements of the Treasury gospel of Free Trade in order that the young apostate might turn his lessons to political profit on the platforms of the opposition. Sir Francis Mowatt had promised the Scribes and Pharisees of Whitehall a morning's amusement at the expense of the Tory squire. Great was their amazement and frank their expression of surprise to find that the object of their derision had completely mastered his subject, and was able to present a case alike admirable in form and cogent in substance. It was a notable day, for in the evening at Birmingham Mr. Chamberlain boldly launched his scheme of Fiscal Reform with all the momentous consequences which that sounding declaration of imperial and domestic policy involved."

THAT BABY AGAIN.



The Old Nurse *He's a little darling and I've got some sugar-plums for him* (Aside *Drat the little wretch, I'll give him pepper if he won't be good and take his bottle*)

[In commenting yesterday on Lord Hugh Cecil's letter to the "Times" we pointed out that the attitude of the Protectionist papers towards Mr Balfour has two sides. He is their best and dearest friend, and it is only a wicked calumny of Free Fooders and Free Traders which represents him as differing from Mr Chamberlain in the slightest degree. But on the other side the discerning may read between the lines a perfectly plain hint of what will happen to Mr Balfour if he should venture to release himself from this affectionate embrace.]

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1903. His exhortation was to "think imperially", and he proposed by a system of preferential tariffs to promote trade with our colonies and at the same time protect home industries from undue foreign competition. Mr. Chaplin entered the fight with an almost youthful vigour, and his speeches have in them all the fire and sonorous eloquence of an earlier day. At Mr. Chamberlain's request he became a member of the Tariff Reform Commission as the representative of agricultural interests, and his leader writes to him thus:

I do most heartily congratulate you upon your personal success. Nothing could have been better or more tactful than your speeches and your meetings are most satisfactory. You are certainly taking your share of the work.

But Tariff Reform was a cause that met with strenuous opposition, and Mr. Balfour, who was then Prime Minister, though he felt considerable sympathy with the movement, found himself unable to give it his whole-hearted support. His indecision gave the Tariff Reformers great cause for anxiety, for, in Mr. Chamberlain's words, "a political programme is like a battering ram. Unless those who work it move step by step, the force of the blow is broken." Yet at one time it seemed that the Tariff Reform movement must carry all before it—not since the famous Midlothian campaign of Gladstone had any political cause met with such enthusiasm—and the movement owed much to the personality and endurance of the men who marched in its vanguard. Mr. Chamberlain writes again to Mr. Chaplin :

I congratulate you upon your success. If you are "venerable" I must be Methusaleh. Never mind ! There

is life in the old dogs yet, and we will bowl over the younger ones before we have done with them.

But the question dragged fruitlessly on. In 1905, Mr. Balfour, who had striven by ingenious compromises to keep the Conservatives united, resigned from office, and the party met disaster at the polls.

Later, when the mantle of the father fell upon the son and Mr. Austen Chamberlain became leader of the Tariff Reform party, he found in Mr. Chaplin his most faithful supporter. In 1911 the success in the Canadian elections of Mr. Borden, an ardent Imperialist, put new heart into the group. But the question had to give place to more urgent matters. When an election threatened in 1912 in order to fight Home Rule, Lord Lansdowne declared that a tax on corn was no longer the party policy. This was confirmed by the Conservative leader, Mr. Bonar Law, and although the latter declared that the flag of Imperial Preference had not been hauled down and that he was prepared to abide by the decision of the colonies on the matter, the Tariff Reform enthusiasts felt the sick disappointment of hope deferred. Mr. Chaplin writes to his friend :

I have spoken on so many platforms on the inestimable boon of Preference to the working classes that I am not willing and can't allow it to be supposed that I am indifferent to the " hauling down of the Flag of Preference"—for it is that and nothing more in my opinion, and I do not say that without good reason.

Again he writes :

Never have I been more bitterly disappointed. What has brought it all about, reading between the lines, so far as I can judge, seems to have been two things—the larger

THE BIRD AND THE SALT.



(After the manner of Olaus Magnus)

In a certain Island in the Fiscal Ocean there is found a bird of such marvellous subtlety that it cannot in any wise be comprehended Men seek to take it by putting salt upon its tail, approaching it with great care

[*Mr Asquith at Nuneaton last week compared the efforts of the Tariff Reform Unionists to capture Mr Balfour to an attempt to catch a bird by putting salt on its tail]*

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of the two Imperial issues now before us, Colonial Preference, has been sacrificed partly to the supposed well-being of the smaller issue, the maintenance of the Union between Ireland and England, under pressure of the fears of the Irish members, lest Home Rule should be carried with any division in the Party : secondly, one of the general fits of panic to which so many members of the Unionist Party now seem periodically liable. Be that as it may, I can neither countenance nor support any policy which practically abandons any effective scheme of Preference—the only thing which has induced me to continue in the House of Commons all these years.

Mr. Chamberlain replies with a sound political philosophy :

I must confess that I am bitterly disappointed and depressed, but if one gives way to feelings of this kind, one should not be a politician. We must make the best of a bad job and see what comfort we can draw even from defeat.

But not even Mr. Chaplin's long political life saw the solution of this particular problem.

Mr. Chaplin's attitude towards the much-discussed policy of Home Rule for Ireland, as might be expected from his imperialistic principles, was one of profound dislike and abhorrence. He had all the distrust of the southern Irishman felt by Englishmen of his type and class. When the crisis came, early in 1914, he made some of his most impassioned speeches in support of Ulster's protest and denounced with all the earnestness of which he was capable what seemed to him the first step in the disruption of the Empire. Years before, he is recorded to have said in conversation with Mr. Gladstone, " Well, if I could have reconciled it with my conscience, I would have voted for your Home Rule Bill for one reason alone, to get rid of all the Irish members ! "

VI

The outbreak of the Great War found Mr. Chaplin still in the House of Commons, ready to take his part with the youngest man. On the 1st August 1914 he wrote a characteristic letter offering to serve in the Northamptonshire Territorial Force in any capacity for which he might be thought useful.

Everybody ought to make himself useful in some way just now and in some work of some kind perhaps I might be of use. I can't walk much but I can still do a fair day's work on horseback, thank God, if it is needed.

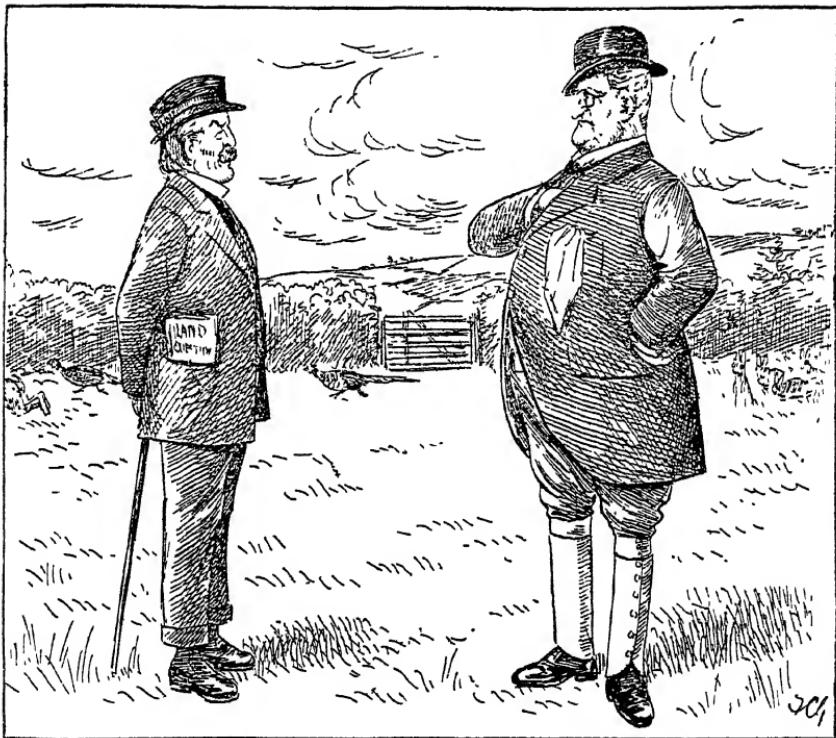
When the Coalition Government was formed in 1915, Mr. Chaplin, as senior Privy Councillor, became the leader of an Opposition that existed merely for the purpose of friendly and helpful criticism. The policy of a Food Controller met with his severe strictures, and his advice on every kind of agricultural matter, then of such deep import to the country, was in constant request. In some of the war emergency measures he saw a justification of his old protectionism. In April 1917 he wrote to Lady Londonderry :

I went to hear Prothero¹ yesterday—he doesn't state the case for the vital need to go back to the old system and grow most of our food here in the future with sufficient conviction to carry his audience, and too often he plays up in smaller things to the Radical gallery, pheasants and such like, and gives the enemy the opportunity of making the most of them, so far at least as I could hear him.

Runciman complains of the introduction of controversial matters in Bills. How he can have the cheek in the face of Asquith's support of Electoral Reform and Ireland, I can't

¹ President of the Board of Agriculture, 1916-19; now Lord Ernle.

TRESPASSING.



THE SQUIRE (Mr Chaplin) *What business have you got on the land? You are trespassing in pursuit of game!*

[The *Morning Post* of Friday last published a letter from Mr. Henry Chaplin attacking Mr. Lloyd George's views on the land question]

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imagine. This is a War Emergency Bill, if it is anything, founded on Devonport's appeal for more food home grown. But he made it quite clear that he and his party were as distinctly hostile as they can be—the debate was adjourned. None of the papers give anything like good reports. They want the increased wages without minimum prices, and to get it would break up the Government apparently if they could, and, like the old Whigs and Radicals in the Peninsular War, chance the War and everything else as they always did then, to get back to power,—damn them !

He acted on innumerable benevolent War committees, and wherever he went his fine presence and cheerful optimism made him a valued friend and counsellor.

Towards the end of 1916, when all at home were engrossed in war work, family life disjointed and every one rigidly rationed, it was difficult to realise, amidst the more poignant horrors of the War, the privations and the shock to the old people resulting from the break-up of the mode of life to which they had been accustomed. During this period Mr. Chaplin was undoubtedly far from well, and the difficulties he experienced in getting to and from the House of Commons were great. He *would* be in his place—yet, with taxis few and far between, and no motors excepting those holding official passes, it was often a matter of real difficulty to get him home at night. Sometimes his man came, and slowly they walked back. At other times, kind friends lent him their motors. All his life he had lived largely on meat, and the meatless days imposed by the restrictions of the War were a very real privation to him—also a deep source of irritation. At the age he then was, he neither stopped to think or reason over the cause. He would

telephone to his daughter to say he was coming to luncheon, and on being reminded it was one of the meatless days, would exclaim, "What, has little Edie also started those abominations!" There is no doubt that he really suffered from restrictions hardly noticed by the young and middle-aged.

He became seriously ill in the winter of 1916–1917. His work and the worry completed the malady, and one day at Springfield he had a slight stroke—so slight that he was not aware of it himself. He had been in hopes of getting some hunting there occasionally, and Lady Londonderry was to come down every week-end and join him. The old family friend and doctor of bygone days, Lieut.-Colonel Charles Brook (a great sportsman in his youth, for he had been a keen rider to hounds and a member of the Blankney Hunt Committee), came over to see him. "Your father will be all right," he said, "if he can be kept quiet, but this House of Commons business is killing him. *It must cease.*" It required a good deal of tact and some management to carry this out, but one day, just before dinner, a Royal letter was received, sent by special messenger. This Mr. Chaplin read over in silence, turning very red. He abruptly left the room and, as he was still dining upstairs, he did not appear again that evening. In the morning he sent for Lady Londonderry before she went out hunting. "I wanted you to see and read this, before I refuse it—and here [handing her a second letter] is my reply." The first letter was one from the King, conferring a peerage on Mr. Chaplin; the second was the answer that Mr. Chaplin proposed to send, setting out his reasons for refusal.

Lady Londonderry was faced with a difficult situation. On the one hand, Colonel Brook had said that continuance in the House would kill him, but he had also said that his patient was not to be argued with in any way. At the moment he was certainly not in a condition to be argued with. What lay at the root of Mr. Chaplin's mind was the feeling that it was the passing of another milestone, and that with his acceptance of the honour he would pass from public life and that "the Squire of Blankney" would be known no more. He was exactly like an old war horse, snuffing the wind and determined to struggle on gamely to the end. To His Majesty he was full of the deepest gratitude. When, however, Lady Londonderry left him it was with the knowledge that a very different letter was being sent to London. In a letter to Sir Joseph Lawrence Mr. Chaplin wrote: "A more touching or more welcome offer could not have been made, or with more thoughtful kindness".

And so the Squire left the House of Commons, where he had worked for nearly half a century, and took his place in the Upper House as Viscount Chaplin, of St. Oswald's, Blankney. The unanimous congratulations of men of every party poured in upon the new Viscount.

In the House of Lords he soon became as popular a figure as he had been in the Commons. In the autumn of 1922, when the fate of the Coalition Government hung in the balance and Mr. Chamberlain called a meeting of the Conservative representatives in the House of Commons to consolidate the compact with the Coalition Liberals, Lord Chaplin, as a member of the Upper House, was not invited to attend. As one

of the oldest of the "Die Hards" his sympathies were naturally against Mr. Chamberlain's policy, and he was an avowed supporter of the group of Conservative politicians represented by Mr. Bonar Law, who, on that day, with an overwhelming majority behind him, struck the death-blow at the Coalition Government and pronounced definitely for party independence. It was early rumoured that Mr. Chamberlain's meeting was to be an exclusive one, and Lord Chaplin protested against this in a letter to the *Times*, emphasising his right to attend as one of the oldest members of the Carlton Club. On the day and at the hour of the meeting he drove up to the door of the Club and sought admittance. The crowds that had gathered in Pall Mall to watch the newcomers accorded the old Peer their heartiest greetings, but in spite of the cheers that rang round him there was something very pathetic about the figure of the old man as he was helped painfully to the pavement and slowly ascended the steps of the club. Pathetic, too, it must have been when, admittance once more refused, he sat in a room adjoining the meeting and wrote a curt little note to his friend :

19th October 1922.

MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN—I did intend to come to the meeting to support the right of every Peer on the authority of the Chairman of the Club to attend, but I do not wish to interfere with the harmony of your proceedings. But this is not to be taken, and cannot be taken, as a precedent on any future occasion, and I say this as a warning.—Yours very truly,

CHAPLIN.

Mr. Chamberlain replied with great tact and courtesy :



HENRY CHAPLIN

Presented by his constituents of the Kesteven Division of Lincolnshire

S. A. S Cope, 1907

20th October 1922.

I won't argue with you, though if I put my case I think it would remove some misconception from your mind in regard to the meeting of the Unionist Party in the House of Commons at the Carlton Club yesterday. All I will say is that whatever differences may arise between us on public questions I hope that you will never allow anything to interfere with the friendship which I have inherited from my father and which is dear to me.

To this direct and friendly appeal Lord Chaplin's warm heart could not remain impervious.

LONDONDERRY HOUSE,
PARK LANE, W.,
24th October 1922.

MY DEAR AUSTEN—Your reply to me is exactly like you ; I am grateful for it and shall keep it.

In a long, very long, Parliamentary career, and often fighting hard, it has been my good fortune never to quarrel with an opponent. The last thing I ever heard from poor old Gladstone even was a pressing message sent through his daughter, which I have somewhere, urging me to go to stay with him at Hawarden ; and now that I have just read your speech in the *Times* of last night, I am by no means sure that the result of the meeting, which you summoned for last Thursday, might not have been different, and when they read it in the Carlton Club, I am certain it will be with the utmost satisfaction.

What did you was the Coalition !! From many letters I received I was almost sure it would be fatal. Far and away the greatest man in my time was Disraeli and he stated at one time (I have it somewhere)¹ "England loves not Coalitions". He certainly was right on this occasion. You need fear no change of feeling on my part, for you never stood higher in my opinion than you do to-day and I shall venture to sign myself your very sincere and affectionate friend,

CHAPLIN.

¹ The quotation is from the peroration of one of Disraeli's finest speeches, his reply in the House of Commons on his Budget of 1852.

This last letter may be taken as the happy note on which Lord Chaplin ended his political career. With him friendship was stronger than political rivalry, and patriotism stood far above personal considerations. And yet he was no trimmer, no weather-cock of politics ; he believed in party government, and in the ordinary business of politics he was a loyal partisan. He ended his career with the same convictions on which he had first based his creed. In the eyes of the younger generation who had grown up around him his gallant soul and genial figure had come to represent something more than an individual. He was a representative of an elder England, which changes in little things but continues unchanged in the greater matters of policy and conduct — the essential England of good sense, generosity, humour, and faithful service.¹

¹ In a recent article in the *Daily Herald* Mr. George Lansbury wrote : "Our best friends were the late Henry Chaplin, Lord Long and Gerald Balfour ; they all, at least, tried to understand us."

IV

HUNTING

A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

Richard III., Act v. Sc. 4.

I saw young Harry, with his beaver on,
His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,

To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.

Henry IV., Pt. I. Act iv. Sc. 1.

I

LIKE his father before him, Mr. Chaplin was a devout lover of foxhunting. The sport to him was more than a pastime—it was a scientific study of absorbing interest, and the evidence is ample of his fascination for details which were never too small and for labours that were never too exacting, provided they related to the manifold affairs of controlling and directing the operations of a pack of foxhounds in a country of historic reputation. Mr. Chaplin's taste was inherited. He himself often bore dutiful testimony to his father's ability as a horseman and to his knowledge of fox-hunting. He bred his son to the Cottesmore and gave him his first lessons on a pony during his tenure of Ryall in Rutland. At his death the boy passed to his uncle's care, with whom he made acquaintance with hunting and with whom he first saw "the red

rascal " steal across the rides at Blankney. Later, when term at Oxford was ending, the uncle would write that "the mare" would be ready for him on his return to Lincolnshire.

Mr. Chaplin had well learnt his lessons in the Chase. He continued them at Christ Church, where his elementary studies in classical literature had to yield to the claims of hunting. It was hunting at Oxford that laid the foundation of Mr. Chaplin's life-long friendship with the Prince of Wales. The Prince, as Sir Sidney Lee records, saw his first fox killed when hunting with the late Lord Macclesfield and the South Oxfordshire pack on 27th February 1860, and was presented with the brush. The Prince's companions from Christ Church were H. Chaplin and Sir F. Johnstone. Sir Sidney adds that under their influence the Prince found means of breaking away from the tightness of leading strings which were designed for him according to a discipline of German pattern.

At the early age of twenty-five Mr. Chaplin assumed the Mastership of the Burton hounds. By this time he had acquired an almost precocious proficiency for the position. No light weight—even then—and rather short-sighted, he rode with hands that were well-nigh perfect and with a courage that was never daunted. No one had a better eye for a country or one keener for the work of hounds at every stage of a hunt. His knowledge of the history of leading strains of blood soon made him a recognised authority in the kennel, and his memory for a pedigree rarely failed him. He had the natural gift of good manners and of firm but persuasive management of a field. His

influence was easily applied and as readily accepted. He had succeeded to a large property and with his tenantry his popularity was complete. Many of the more important farmers shared his ardent love of foxhunting and themselves bred a good type of hunter with bone and substance. In a season unfavourable for farming interests these sportsmen could count with certainty on the sympathy and generosity of their young landlord.

Throughout his life Mr. Chaplin was always ready to recognise the authority of leadership, where the title had been justly earned : and in the science of hunting he always deferred to the discriminating ability and extensive knowledge possessed by his intimate friend and mentor, Lord Henry Bentinck.

Lord Henry was the fourth son of the fourth Duke of Portland, who died in 1854, and who had won the Derby of 1819 with *Tiresias*. He was, as we have seen, the younger brother of Lord George Bentinck, whose political career was only a parenthesis, but whose authority on the English turf has never been approached. On the death of Lord George, Mr. Disraeli, who had heard the sad news at Wynyard, wrote at once to Lord Henry. Soon there arose the famous controversy about the succession to the leadership of the party in the House of Commons. Lord Henry, then member for Nottinghamshire, was very active in the business, bringing the Bentinck, Newcastle, Christopher, and Trollope influence to bear upon the movement to declare Disraeli the political heir, and incurring the censure of the Whips who then, as always, defined a difference of opinion in the party ranks as an intrigue. So keen was Lord Henry's

advocacy that Disraeli wrote to his wife (January 9, 1849), "Lord Henry is going to give up hunting in order to support me!" "What an admirable man," he also wrote of Lord Henry to Lord John Manners, "worthy of being our dear friend's brother." In later life the Conservative leader's verdict on Lord Henry was : "With some eccentricities one of the ablest men and finest characters I have ever met." To what eccentricities Disraeli referred is not disclosed ; but in a letter to his sister Sarah, Disraeli informs her that Lord Henry "never goes to Court and those sort of things", but when told that his political chief was to make a speech at the Mansion House in a red coat as leader of the House of Commons, decided to support him in a Court dress which apparently belonged to the old Duke of Bulstrode. It was to Lord Henry in 1850 that Disraeli communicated his idea of raising a permanent monument to his brother's memory in the splendid biography which immortalises his name and which bears a dedication to the younger brother. In 1855 Lord Henry was in some peril of being drawn into the official hierarchy, for when there was a prospect of Lord Derby forming an Administration, Bentinck's name was suggested as Secretary to the Admiralty. Nothing, however, came of this. Apparently Lord Henry enjoyed his freedom, the Mastership of the Burton hounds, and hunting the country six days a week. There have been many who would have done well to follow Lord Henry's example, and to prefer the uniform of a hunt to the livery of minor office.

It was always Mr. Chaplin's aim and ambition to build on Lord Henry's long experience, and to main-



Frank Wright

H. Boucherett

Parson Howson

Shuley.

Charles Chaplin

Sir Richard Burton

Mifflin

MIFFLIN OF THE BURTON HOUNDS.

tain a kennel conspicuous for the best type of foxhound. The relations between Lord Henry and Mr. Chaplin in the matter of hunting cannot be better displayed than in the following documents.

It appears that one wild and stormy day in Scotland, when sport was impossible, Lord Henry took up his pen and addressed a letter to Mr. Chaplin on foxhounds and their handling in the field based on Goodall's practice. This letter—in form a treatise—was, after Lord Henry's death, published by Mr. Chaplin, who prefixed to it a rather elaborate note.

For the benefit of the present generation a reference may here be made to the famous huntsman Will Goodall. This worthy was the son of a man who had been hunting-groom for eight seasons in the Belvoir country. He began life at ten years of age as cover-boy to Tom Drake and after three seasons became second whip under Wingfield. He proved a very lively colleague—"jumping the Church walls like a hare." Later, he went under Goosey at Belvoir. Goosey was very frank with him on his arrival—" You must not mind," said the old fellow, " if I give you a good blowing up in the field. I am as likely to do so if you're right or wrong." Goosey never minced his words to hunt servants : but to the most offending gentleman of the hunt he would use the preface of, " I beg leave to say ". Thus, with delightful irony, he once turned on a clumsy thruster : " You jumped on that hound, sir, at the fence and I beg leave to say, sir, you buried him as well."

Goodall was a fine horseman, combining the admirable quality of nursing his mount with extraordinary quickness of eye so that he was always with his

hounds. Firmly but gently he managed a crowded field. He hated to be beaten. Once when a Humby Wood fox was too much for him he went back in the evening, and putting a lot of old men and old women with lanterns in the rides he puzzled on until he got home just before the dawn of Sunday. It was his pride that he kept the best of Goosey's legacy in the kennel—close workers and steady hounds—among them Jasper, brother to Juniper, Topper, and Saladin, the sire Furrier, and Rasselias by Clinker. The Belvoir kennel was practically made by Rallywood, and this hound was, perhaps, Goodall's favourite. Still he had Grappler, a great worker, and Comus, a model little dog who ran in the bitch pack, noted for his nose, a very hard runner. Lord Henry Bentinck went much to Comus, whose dam, Barmaid, was highly valued at Belvoir. Goodall delighted in writing, and was always pleased to show his diary with "the cream of my hunting fun" in it: but he would never describe a run unless there were a head at the end. Rather than make use of print he used to copy in his own hand the whole of the price lists of the hounds at the sales, and he conducted a voluminous correspondence with the huntsmen of all the leading packs. He had a phraseology of his own—some of which has passed permanently into hunting vernacular—e.g. "screamed over the fallows"—"raced with him and ate him"—"a blazing hour"—"blew him up in the open". His diary is studded with wonderful little comments on man, horse, and hound. He died as he would: a bad fall from his horse left him lying on his horn. They took his horn to his bedside before he died and, holding it in his hands, he showed them how he fell.

Once, and once only, he rose from his bed, and that was to take Lord Henry Bentinck to see his young Rallywoods of the third generation. "My kind Lord Duke," as he always called him, bent over his death-bed to thank him and to say good-bye. As the mourners followed him to his grave at Knipton, near that of his old master Goosey, they were thrilled by a dirge from the hounds in the kennel. He bequeathed many a fine lesson of conduct and character for those who aspire to the highest place in the honourable profession of hunting service.¹

MR. CHAPLIN'S NOTE
ON LORD HENRY BENTINCK'S LETTER

Written to me by the late Lord Henry Bentinck (not very long after I had bought his pack of hounds—1864) from Loch Ericht, his small shooting lodge in the famous deer forest of Ardverikie.

Its republication was the subject of our correspondence. To this letter I replied by saying that I thought it ought to be published, and asked his leave to do it. But this he would not give me, saying he could write something much better than that, and would do so, some day.

After relinquishing political interests Lord Henry's favourite pursuits were, for the remainder of his life, hunting in the winter, deer-stalking in the autumn, and playing whist in the summer, in which he was *facile princeps*—in fact, in those days he was said to be the finest player in Europe.

My acquaintance with him was on this wise: I knew him, and well, from the time I was a boy. He had been Master of the Burton Country in Lincolnshire for many years—nearly thirty, I think—one of the three countries in England which were hunted six days a week at that time, and where his chief supporter was my uncle, Mr. Charles Chaplin, who gave him a subscription of £1200 a year, and

¹ For these details, see Dixon, *The Druid, passim*.

whose tenants on an estate of between twenty and thirty thousand acres used to walk for him a very large number of puppies, than which nothing is more important for the successful breeding of a first-class pack of hounds. And I succeeded him within no long period after I came of age, my uncle having died while I was still at Christ Church, when I continued the old subscription. It was shortly after that, however, that Lord Henry expressed his wish to give up the country, whereupon I bought his hounds for £3500 and took the Burton Country myself, of which he had been Master for so many years.

Lord Henry was a man of quite exceptional ability, as I had every reason to believe—not only from what I know myself, but, some years afterwards, from no less an authority than Mr. Disraeli. . . . And, from all the experience I have had since then, I have very little doubt that his was probably the best brain ever given to the breeding of hounds, and hunting; and he was also, I think, upon the whole, one of the best horsemen, and with the finest hands upon a horse that was difficult to ride I ever knew, with the possible exception of Lord Lonsdale.

I make no comments on Lord Henry's description of Goodall's Practice, in the handling of his hounds, excepting this: I agree with everything he says, but it is necessary to remember this—the Burton Country, where his chief experience lay, was a country of comparatively small and manageable fields of horsemen; very different from those you see in the Quorn, the Cottesmore, the Pytchley, and the chief fashionable grass countries, and sometimes the Belvoir, on the grass side of that country. But the principles which are inculcated, nevertheless, hold good; and, once a pack of hounds have learnt to know, and believe in, their huntsman, they are never happy away from him, and there is nothing they won't do, and no effort they won't make, to get back to him. Tom Firr was a notable instance of this in the Quorn; but then he had the best Master in England (Lord Lonsdale) to help him, and no one could handle a big field better than he could, that I've ever seen; and the way in which he

controlled a field of possibly five or six hundred horsemen on a Quorn Friday was a triumph of organisation I have never seen surpassed.

For instance, when drawing one of their crack coverts in that country, the field was kept away some distance from it, often nearly a whole field, until the fox had gone away, and the huntsman had got hold of his hounds sufficiently to get a start of him ; and then, when the field got the order to go, my word ! There was a charge of cavalry with a vengeance to get up on them.

Lord Annaly did the same thing in the Pytchley and had the same complete control of the field ; and in this way with the combination of Lonsdale and Firr in the Quorn, and Annaly and Freeman in after years in the Pytchley, there could not have been a happier arrangement for successful sport out hunting, if there was any scent at all.

There were two first-rate huntsmen also. The rarest and most difficult thing in the world to find in my experience is a really good huntsman. . . .

I have often said it was easier to find a good Prime Minister than a real good huntsman, and Heaven knows that either is difficult enough. . . .

I think that . . . this admirable little treatise called *Goodall's Practice* should be preserved in the interest of Fox-hunting for the use of this and future generations.

The language is so simple and so much of it is ordinary common sense, that any one can understand it.

It would be invaluable for Hunt servants, both huntsmen and their whippers-in who serve under them in particular—many of whom are seldom taught enough by their superiors or masters. I think it is better education in their case which is needed more than anything, and I will conclude with an instance of what I mean.

I was rather late one morning in arriving at a gorse covert in the Belvoir Country ; Coston covert, I think it was, into which the hounds had just been put to draw. I had to come from Barley Thorpe, and I saw at once it wasn't the huntsman who was in the covert with the hounds, and I was

told it was the first whip, Freeman, who had never hunted them before, the huntsman being disabled by a fall the previous day. I knew him quite well, so I went into the covert to see if I could help him.

"So you are handling hounds, I understand," I said, "for the first time to-day?"

"Ah, yes, Squire," he said, "and I can do nothing with them," he replied.

"Well," I said, "I've been at it all my life, and perhaps I could tell you one or two things which might be useful."

"I should be most grateful if you would," he said.

He had been blowing his horn whenever the fox crossed a ride, with the same note that ought only to be used when he has gone away, or he has been caught.

So I replied, "Put your horn into its case to begin with, and don't blow it again, like you have been doing, till your fox has gone away, or till you want to draw your hounds out of the covert, which you should do with one or two long-drawn notes; or till you have caught your fox and got him lying dead before you. Then you may blow the note you've been using as long as you like. That is one thing.

"The next thing is this: when you've gone away with a fox, and come to a check, don't go to help your hounds till they ask you, and the way you will know they are asking you is this, and these hounds (who at that time were constantly interfered with) will ask you immediately because they are accustomed to it.

"You will see them standing with their heads up, wagging their sterns, and doing nothing to feel for the scent or to help themselves. When you see that, go straight into the middle of the pack, turn your horse, say 'cop-cop' or anything you like, trot off, and they will go with you like a flock of sheep.

"Trot gently up to wherever you think your fox is most likely to have gone, and if you are lucky to hit off his line, they will go all the easier with you the next time.

"Now," I said, "that is enough for to-day, and I shall stay out to see how you get on."

I stayed out until quite late in the evening. It was in the Spring. He was fortunate enough to hit off his fox the first time, and before the evening the hounds had taken to him completely, and he could do anything he liked with them.

He was so nice and modest-minded a fellow that he came half a mile out of his way to meet me on my way home, and when we met he said, "I couldn't go home, Squire, without thanking you for what you told me this morning. The ambition of my life is to be a huntsman. I am most anxious to learn, and you are the first person, gentleman or huntsman, who has ever told me a single thing."

"Well," I said, "you seem very appreciative, and whenever you find yourself in a difficulty either as a whipper-in or huntsman, if you will write and tell me what it is, I will tell you anything I can to help you."

That is the difficulty, I fear, with too many of the younger ones in that profession, and nothing could help them more than what they would learn from Lord Henry Bentinck's plain and simple letter to me on Goodall's Practice. I sent a copy of it to Freeman very shortly afterwards, and we corresponded frequently, and do still; and no one that I know has a better reputation as a huntsman to-day, or shows more sport than he does.

(Signed) CHAPLIN.

LORD HENRY BENTINCK'S LETTER ON WILLIAM GOODALL'S METHOD WITH HOUNDS

1. In handling his Hounds in the open, with a Fox before him, he never had them rated or driven to him by his whips; never hallooed them from a distance. When he wanted them he invariably went himself to fetch them, anxiously watching the moment that the Hounds had done trying for themselves, and felt the want of him. He then galloped straight up to their heads, caught hold of them, and cast them in a body a hundred yards in his front, every Hound busy before him with his nose snuffing the ground, his hackles up, his stern curled over his back, each Hound relying on himself and believing in each other. When cast in this way, the Huntsman learns the exact value of each Hound, while the young

Hounds learn what old Hounds too believe in and fly to, and when the scent is taken up no Hound is disappointed. When the Huntsman trails his Hounds behind him, four-fifths of his best Hounds will be staring at his horse's tail, doing nothing.

The Hounds came to have such confidence in Goodall, that with a burning scent, he would cast them in this way at a hand gallop, all the Hounds in his front making every inch of ground good ; while with a poor scent he would do it at a walk, regulating his pace by the quality of the scent ; the worse the scent, the more time the Hounds want to puzzle it out.

On this system the Hounds are got to the required spot in the very shortest time, with every Hound busily at work, and with his nose tied to the ground.

On the opposite vulgar plan, the Huntsman, galloping off to his Fox, hallooing his Hounds from a distance, his noise drives the Hounds in the first instance to flash wildly in the opposite direction ; four or five minutes are lost before the whip can come up and get to their heads ; then they are flogged up to their Huntsman, the Hounds driving along with their heads up, their eyes staring at their Huntsman's horse's tail, looking to their Huntsman for help, disgusted, and not relying upon themselves, especially the best and most sagacious Hounds. A few minutes more are lost before the best Hounds will put their noses down and begin to feel for the scent, a second check becomes fatal, and the Fox is irretrievably lost. Often enough, in being whipped up to their Huntsman in this way, when crossing the line of the Fox *with their heads up*, they first catch the wind, and then, as a matter of course, they must take the scent heelways, the Fox, as a rule, running down the wind. This fatal piece of bungling, so injurious to Hounds—is always entirely owing to the Huntsman ; it is neither the fault of the whips or the Hounds ; it never can occur when the Huntsman moves his Hounds in his front with their noses down. In these two different systems lies the distinction between being quick and a bad hurry.

2. When the Fox was gone, in place of galloping off after his Fox without his Hounds, blowing them away down the wind from such a distance that half the Hounds would not hear him, and he would only get a few leading Hounds still further separated from the body¹—*Goodall would take a sharp hold of his horse's head, quick as lightning turn back in the opposite direction, get up wind of the body of his Hounds, and blowing them away from the tail, bring up the two ends together, giving every Hound a fair chance to be away with the body.*

It is impossible to over-estimate the mischief done to a pack of Hounds by unfairly and habitually leaving a Hound behind out of its place ; it is teaching them to be rogues. For this purpose, Goodall had one particular note of his horn never used at any other time except when his Fox was gone, or his Fox was in his hand ; *the Hounds, learning the note, would leave a Fox in covert to fly to it. Hounds are very sagacious animals ; they cannot bear being left behind, nor do they like struggling through thick covert ; but if that note is ever used at any other time the charm is gone ; the Hounds will not believe in it ; you cannot lie to them with impunity.* This was Goodall's great secret for getting his Hounds away all in a lump on the back of his Fox, and hustling him before he had time to empty himself. This was his system for getting his Hounds through large woodlands : to come tumbling out together without splitting and sticking to their run Fox. This is the explanation of the famous old Meynell saying, “ In the second field they gathered themselves together, in the third they commenced a terrible burst ”.

3. Goodall's chief aim was to get the hearts of his Hounds. He considered Hounds should be treated like women ; that they would not bear to be bullied, to be deceived, or neglected with impunity. For this end, he would not meddle with them in their casts until they had done trying for themselves, and felt the want of him ; he *paid them the compliment of going to fetch them* ; he never *deceived or neglected them* ; he

¹ The italics on these passages were made by Mr. Chaplin, showing that he attached especial weight to them.

was continually cheering and making much of his Hounds ; if he was compelled to disappoint them by roughly *stopping them off a suckling vixen or dying Fox at dark*, you should see him, as soon as he had got them stopped, jump off his horse, get into the middle of his pack, and spend ten minutes in making friends with them again. The result was that the Hounds were never happy without him, and when lost would drive up through any crowd of horsemen to get to him again, and it was very rare for a single Hound to be left out.

It is impossible to over-rate the mischief done to a pack of Hounds by leaving them out ; it teaches them every sort of vice, upsets their condition, besides now exposing them to be destroyed on the railway line. There is no more certain test of the capacity of a Huntsman than the manner in which his Hounds fly to him and work for him with a will.

Goodall, Old Musters, and Foljambe¹ were undoubtedly the three Master-minds of our day. Their general system of handling Hounds was much the same, though each had his peculiar excellence, and each has often said that if they lived to be a hundred they would learn something every year. All three agreed in this, that it was ruinous to a pack of Hounds to meddle with them before they had done trying for themselves.² The reasoning upon this most material point is very simple. If the Hounds are habitually checked, and meddled with in their natural casts, they will learn to stand still at every difficulty, and wait for their Huntsman ; every greasy wheat field will bring them to a dead stop, and however hard the Huntsman may ride on their back, two or three minutes must be lost before he can help them out of their difficulty, whilst in woods he cannot ever know what they are about. (For once the Huntsman can help them, nineteen times the Hounds must help themselves.) It was Old Muster's remark that for the first ten minutes the Hounds knew a good deal more than he did, but after they tried all they knew

¹ Frank Foljambe of Osberton Hall, Worksop, later on had Hounds near Worksop, which he hunted himself. He built a house at Lincoln on the road to Wragby, and installed no drainage, only the Norwegian system—saying it was safer than drains. In those days no doubt he spoke with reason.

² See Lord Lonsdale to Mr. Chaplin, p. 228.

then he could form an opinion where the Fox was gone, but not before.

Mr. Foljambe attached the greatest importance to getting his Hounds away together. Before his Hounds were a field away from a wood you might hear him sing out, "Want a Hound", and his horn would be going at their tails until he got him, and when got, he would drop back and not care to go near them until they had been five or ten minutes at a check. But if a single Hound was wanting when a Fox was killed, however great the run, he would harp upon it for a month.

Goodall combined, with his other excellencies in the field, condition and kennel management quite the best.

Mr. Foljambe was by far the best breeder of Hounds, and had the keenest eye for a Hound's work—nothing escaped him.

Old Dick Burton was my first huntsman in the Burton Country, and showed great sport for many years. He was the best hand at breaking a pack of Hounds from hares and teaching them to draw, upon which so much depends. He always *drew his wood up the wind*, throwing his *Hounds in fifty or sixty yards from the wood, and allowing them to spread*, so that every Hound should be busy, with his head down looking for his Fox ; and had them in his front, making noise enough to cheer them and enable them to know where he was ; and in cub-hunting made the Hounds find their cub for themselves, and would not have him hallooed at first across the ride. (Nothing is truer than the old saying, "A Fox *nicely found is half killed*".) He would trot through the hollow covert with his Hounds behind him, and occasionally blow his horn, to wake up any chance Fox, and get Hounds in the thick covert, where they could not use their eyes, as quickly as possible, and then give them as much time as they liked. Nothing is worse than hurrying Hounds through strong covert, or forcing them to draw over again a covert when they are satisfied that there is not a Fox in it. The blackthorn and gorse coverts he would always *draw down the wind, keeping carefully behind his Hounds*; by so doing, first,

the Hounds have their heads down, and never chop a Fox—they do not see him. The Fox hears them, and the wildest Fox is off at once, and the cubs learn to steal away after the Hounds are gone. Second, it enabled him to get the body and tail Hounds out of the covert without hunting the line of the Fox through the strong gorse ; brought the two ends together all away on the back of the old Fox—the true secret of getting a sharp burst.

No man could turn out a highly mettled pack of Hounds, and so young a lot steady from hares as old Dick Burton. In the year 1859, when Hatton country was as full as Blankney with riot, we found in Hatton Wood, at a quarter before twelve, and in the month of February, ran from Fox to Fox until half-past three, when all the second horses being beat and fog rising up, I rode amongst the Hounds, coming away from Hatton Wood the last time to see what I had got. To my astonishment, I found my pack consisted of 11 couples of puppies and 5½ of old Hounds !! We had had an old dog kicked, and old “ Darling ” leading them, then five years old, and showing himself for the first time.

Old Dick’s principle was to break his puppies by themselves, showing them all the riot he could in the summer, and drilling them severely, but never allowing a whip to FLOG THEM after they had escaped to his heels, or to flog them when coming out of a wood and cutting them off. After being well drilled, he would then take them amongst the cubs and smash up a litter of cubs, bleeding them up to their eyes to make them forget their punishment, and to care for nothing but a Fox. Hounds being unsteady for hares when Foxes ARE PLENTIFUL, is entirely the FAULT OF THE HANDLING. The highest praise that can be given to a huntsman is for a fool to say : “ We had a great run and killed our Fox ; as for the huntsman, he might have BEEN IN BED ”. A Huntsman’s FIRST BOAST should be that all his Hounds required was to be taken to the covertsides and taken home again. His greatest disgrace is, first, to have his Hounds squandered all over the country, and to leave them out ; second, to be unable to get them out of a wood ;

third, not to know to a yard where he lost his Fox—if properly managed the Hounds will always tell it to him.

The causes that have produced the present unsteadiness in the Hounds from hares were, first: In 1863,¹ seventeen virtually blank days, that is not finding a Fox whilst there was light to kill him, and rarely a day with two or three Foxes to bring the Hounds to their senses and work them down, left the season's puppies unbroken.

Secondly, in 1864 the terrible mistake was made of leaving the Hounds at Home through the cub-hunting season, on account of the dryness of the ground. Regular hunting was commenced with two-year-olds, worse than puppies entirely undrilled; and short days were made.

Thirdly, in breaking the Hounds in 1865, they were completely ruined by being rated and flogged in coming out of covert to their huntsman, taught to turn back to the woods, and to remain there, afraid to come out; and, when left to themselves, hunting hares by hours together.

Fourthly, taking the Fox's head away from the Hounds. No practice can be more abominable or more Cockney. A puppy that has once fought for the head and carried it home in triumph, trotting in front of the Hounds, will NEVER LOOK AT A HARE AGAIN; he is made from that day and marks himself a STALLION HOUND.

Fifthly, neither the first, second, nor third being to be depended upon, the steady old Hounds never knew when to go to the cry, and at last joined the wild Hounds when a large body had got together. To get them right, it would be desirable to put together all the *two-year-olds*, and all determined *hare-hunters*, such as "Saladin",² etc., of the *three-year-olds*, and drill *them by themselves*, then take them

¹ This was his last season and I bought the pack, I think, in 1864. But the next year I went to India, and I got Lord Henry to persuade Lord Doneraile to become temporary Master till I returned. It was during his reign that all these things of which Lord Henry complains were done (Lord Chaplin's note).

² "Saladin", faultless in shape and breeding, was so thrashed and flogged in my absence, that though broken from hares, his heart was broken too, and he never became the brilliant Dog he would have been!!! (Lord Chaplin's note).

into the Wragby Woodlands, where you are sure of a large litter ; work the cubs for four or five hours, and smash up three of them, having three or four lads to watch the cubs, so that as soon as they have eaten one you may know where to go and clap them on another LEG-WEARY CUB. The next time their turn is to go out, take them to Blankney and Ashby, and smash up another litter in the middle of the hares. After being hunted three weeks by themselves, then mix them together. It is essential that the steady quiet Hounds should not be exposed to the annoyance of hearing the wild Hounds rated and flogged ; it disgusts them, and they will do nothing, merely following, NOT GUIDING, the pack.

The Burton hounds had always been famous for the many remarkable men who had been masters of the country. Names such as Lord Monson, Mr. Osbaldeston (the Squire),¹ Foljambe, Musters, and Assheton Smith, all figure in the annals of that hunt. Besides being great characters, they were noted horsemen and their record as sportsmen is permanent in hunting history.

Assheton Smith built the kennels and stables near Lincoln and was one of the hardest riders to hounds ever known. It was while Master of the Burton that Assheton Smith made the celebrated bridge jump, thus described in his biography : “ The hounds came to a cut, or navigable canal, called the Fosdyke, over which were two bridges, one a bridle bridge, the other used for carts, running parallel to each other at a considerable distance apart. At one end of these bridges there is usually a high gate leading into the field adjoining the canal, and along each side of them

¹ See pp. 39-46, where the story is told of Osbaldeston’s duel with Lord George Bentinck.

is a low rail to protect persons going over. Smith rode along one of the bridges, and found the gate at the end locked, whereupon, seeing the gate open at the end of the parallel bridge he immediately put his horse at the rear rails, and jumped across, over the opposite rails on to the other bridge, to the surprise of all who witnessed the feat."

Sir Richard Sutton who succeeded him removed his hounds from Lincoln to the original kennels of Lord Monson at Burton. Sir Richard and Charles Chaplin were related—cousins in the second degree—a Sutton having married a former Chaplin of Tathwell. He did everything in princely style, and after having had the Quorn hounds he took the Burton, which he only relinquished owing to a fractured thigh.

Brilliant as had been the career of the hunt under these great masters, it gained, if possible, in reputation under Lord Henry Bentinck, who succeeded Sir Richard in 1842. On the death of Lord Scarborough in 1835, Lord Henry became Master of the Rufford hounds; but on giving them up three seasons later, hunted at Lincoln, and when Assheton Smith retired from the Burton country, he took his place near Lincoln.

Owing to chronic attacks of gout, Lord Ducie had been compelled to give up the V.W.H. country. Lord Henry Bentinck purchased the kennel, which included twenty-five couples of Mr. Osbaldeston's hounds. The Burton kennel also contained a good deal of Mr. Foljambe's strain. In all, Lord Henry Bentinck, as soon as he had settled down, had about a hundred couple of hounds, and year by year the effects of skilful breeding were seen in a greatly improved pack.

It represented the best strains of The Grove, Belvoir, and Brocklesby. Perhaps the dog-hounds were a little light of bone ; but Lord Henry never could get to the bottom of them. He brought the art of handling hounds to perfection—no noise, halloos, whip-cracking or over-riding were tolerated for a moment. Sir Reginald Graham¹ has truly said, “Lord Henry devoted a lifetime and his great talents to the breeding of hounds, but he also understood better than any one that his labour was in vain, unless they were carefully and judiciously handled in the field.” He kept a private kennel book in which he recorded every detail concerning each hound, and this most interesting record shows his close and acute observation of the qualities and performances of nearly every hound in the pack. The following are some specimens of Lord Henry’s notes. Thus he writes :

Tomboy, 1845. Got the name of the Schoolmaster of the pack, and was probably the best and most sagacious dog that ever ran in the Midland countries. Comus and Tomboy ran in the bitch pack. There was little to choose between them—in nose, brilliancy or stoutness ; each dog was equally quick in dropping clear into the dry ditches and working a dying fox out of them. But Comus could be led wrong by wild men or a flashing pack of hounds ; while neither man, nor hound nor fox could make a fool of Tomboy. However wild men or hounds might be, he would quickly leave them and turn back to his fox. Nothing could put him out of temper, and in his last season he could still race with puppies at night.

Comus in shape was a model dog, and a capital stallion, while Tomboy was nearly drafted as a puppy,

¹ *Fox-hunting Recollections*, by Sir Reginald Graham, p. 22.



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and was an uncertain getter—no dog ever got by him could get puppies.

Driver, Stranger, Streamer were three capital dogs. Driver was noted for bringing the fox's brush to his huntsman out of Harpswell Gorse. His son Desperate showed the same characteristic. A fox having been left in a rabbit hole in Carlton Sand Hills, the hounds being called away, Desperate gave the men the slip, went back to the hole, scratched down to his cub, bit off half his brush and brought it on to old Dick at Scampton.

Contest, 1848. A model dog, a most brilliant animal ; noted for his hard running, flying the gates and double rails without touching them, and, too, for turning short without the need of a "drag chain".

Ruler, 1850. This was an extraordinary brilliant dog, a very hard runner, and remarkable for the distance he could bring his hounds back to the spot where they last had it good ; and for working the dry ditches, old Rosebud's excellence came out in him.

Ringworm, 1856. Noted for jumping out of the very centre of the pack in full cry when hunting it heelway—turning back and never being caught for two miles in the Gainsboro' Woods.

Hunting-men will appreciate the following example of Lord Henry's humour. It is given by Sir Reginald Graham with a charming indifference to his own dignity. He writes :

It was in the Burton country I made my first attempt at hunting hounds. Late in the afternoon, when all had gone home except three or four, we had a very sharp scurry for ten or fifteen minutes after a fox almost in view, when a drain came in our way, a big jump, but on a little Irish horse of mine called Cannibal, I got well over. The dyke was

probably of more formidable dimensions elsewhere, as it stopped even Mr. Chaplin, as well as Mr. Chandos Leigh and Lord Henry.

The hounds ran on for another five minutes, then threw up suddenly in the middle of a fallow field, and never touched the line again. There was no one in sight, so after a time, with all the confidence of youth, I proceeded to hold the hounds down wind and then in other directions. No doubt I must have thought it encouraging to the pack to wave my right arm with energy, as I took them along with that action of the hand which is much in vogue on poultry farms. All in vain. They never touched the line again.. I looked round once more ; what did I see ? Fifty yards behind there stood Lord Henry himself, the Messrs. Chaplin, Chandos Leigh, and Charley Hawtin. Would that the earth could have swallowed me up at that moment ! Slowly, step by step, the cavalcade approached ! I heard a smothered "Hush" and yet another pause ! At last Lord Henry, in slow, measured tones, almost hissed out word by word : "Sir Reginald, when you have quite done feeding your chickens, perhaps you will allow *my* huntsman to cast *my* hounds." I did not hear the last of it for many a day. Even now, forty years after date, I doubt if that episode is quite forgotten when I meet my good old friends the Right Honourable Henry Chaplin and Sir E. Chandos Leigh.¹

Lord Henry's hunters were managed with great care and judgement. His stables were situated at Reepham, near Lincoln, and were luxuriously equipped. Among other luxuries were a covered ride and a Turkish bath ! This bath was built to accommodate eight horses at a time. They were brought in on their return from hunting, and after they had broken out, were put under a stream of cold water, scraped, dried, clothed and bandaged, and led back to their respective boxes. This plan was found to work well ;

¹ *Fox-hunting Recollections*, p. 32.

the condition of the horses conclusively showing that the treatment agreed with them. For twenty-one years Lord Henry Bentinck showed wonderful sport, and the countryside unaffectedly mourned his resignation at the termination of the season 1862–63.

In 1863 when Lord Henry Bentinck resigned the Mastership of the Burton country, Mr. Chaplin purchased his hounds, and when Lord Henry's horses were sold at Tattersall's, Mr. Chaplin bought the first three for a thousand guineas, the total realised for all the horses being 12,461 guineas. After the sale Lord Henry remarked that he ought to add a wing to the Lincoln Asylum to accommodate all the lunatics !

Soon after this purchase of Lord Henry's hounds, Mr. Chaplin went abroad. By an arrangement with Lord Doneraile he left the pack and the country in his charge, and Lord Doneraile came over from Ireland and assumed the temporary Mastership at Mr. Chaplin's expense. Lord Doneraile, for some time previously, had been commissioned by Mr. Chaplin to buy most of his weight-carrying hunters for him in Ireland. On Mr. Chaplin's return in 1865 he took the hounds over from Lord Doneraile and continued the Mastership until 1871, when the country was divided and the new Blankney hunt was constituted.

Mr. Chaplin's temporary abandonment of hunting was undoubtedly due to the treatment he had received at the hands of Lord Hastings and Lady Florence Paget.¹ Lord Henry writes to him from York, 1st August 1864, “I was sorry to miss catching you at Blankney. I have had two or three letters from Doneraile touching the hound question. He had been

¹ See p. 47.

on the point of writing to you direct when that event occurred which will have annoyed you so much ; but all your *true friends* without exception—and you have many, old and young, male and female—look upon it as the most blessed deliverance—and Doneraile thought that it was not a time to annoy you with any trivial matters. I have now written to him to tell him that you are anxious to hear from him before leaving for Scotland. I gather from his letters that he is very keen upon undertaking the job, and I told him that he ought to be able to do it with £3000 a year paid into his pocket, with my stables given in and the country kept for him. But Moreland Hutton¹ who has been staying with Doneraile is just returned, and will know Doneraile's—or, what is more important—my lady's will and pleasure on the matter. I myself could not make out the exact amount of the squeezable capacity of Lincolnshire and whether the £3000 would be found plus expenses of the country.” In September Lord Henry writes again—“ I have just heard that Doneraile will arrive with a new string of 10 animals picked up in one excursion. I do not see how the house difficulty is to be obviated—unless Doneraile applies for a divorce *a mensâ et toro* during the winter months. I have been touched up by lumbago and gouty tendencies to such a degree that I am doubtful whether I shall not carry out my hankering for an expedition into Albania after the long bills and the wild fowl. I can walk off the lumbago but not ride it off. If I come down to Lincoln, I shall be quite ready for Oliver—if Sir Frederick Johnstone quarrels with him—but, at

¹ George Moreland Hutton, 2nd son of William Hutton of Gate Burton.

present, I have not turned my attention to replenishing my decimated stud."

Before the next letter Mr. Chaplin had returned to the hounds. Lord Henry then wrote :

The young master omitted to name the pack that had the scurry from Torrington and still worse the dog that helped his fellow over the dry ditch !! I hope he will be more observant in the future. I am glad that you have made an example of the Warrior. I am confident that Gilbert knows very well that foul play has been going on regularly at Blankney. Hay turned off several Keepers for vulpicidal acts. I would make a great rout about the slaughter at *Glentworth*, at *Hackthorn*, at *Cranwell*, at *Burton*, at *Norton Place*, at *Norton Disney*, at *Eagle*, and *Stapleford*. It is impossible for Goddard to get a flying pack steady unless he has cubs to admit of 25 brace at least being smashed up in cubhunting—as old Dick Burton used to do. If you threaten to take the Hounds away to the Vale of White Horse after a few long draws, you will make the people bestir themselves. Norton, Apely, and Bloxholm and the Broughton coverts on your side must be added to the frightful list—where a fox is scarcely allowed to live.

In the sense of being sick, I am a very good sailor, but confinement on board ship is intolerably irksome to me. Otherwise, I should undoubtedly have a turn at Albania. As soon as I return to Lincoln, I will get a book made out of all the entries for the last 22 years—for my own Hounds. You would do well to get from Foljambe, Belvoir, and Brocklesby a Book made up of their several entries. It will save you a great deal of trouble when you take to breeding your own hounds.

It will be seen from the foregoing that there was trouble in the Burton country. Poison, barbed wire, and traps led to acute local quarrels, and were contributory reasons to Lord Henry Bentinck's resignation of the Mastership. To this heritage Mr. Chaplin

succeeded. He did much to improve matters. His papers include copies of correspondence with the enemies of hunting and those who preferred pheasants to foxes, and, in this connection, the *venue* of Norton Disney is conspicuous. But, although the various letters establish Mr. Chaplin's claims as a fair, if vigorous, controversialist, his posthumous reputation hardly requires their quotation in these pages.

Mr. Chaplin hunted the country six days a week. He kept four packs of hounds and hunted his own pack twice a week—the huntsman six days a week being with the other packs. The two packs were frequently out the same day. After his return from India until 1870, Mr. Chaplin undertook to hunt the country practically at his own expense, the only provision being that the members paid certain items which did not amount to any greater sum than about £700 a year.

Under Lord Henry's *régime* Charlie Hawtin was the huntsman, a first-rate man, who understood and acted on Lord Henry's theories to perfection. Hawtin was huntsman with Mr. Chaplin till 1875, when he went to Sir Reginald Graham in the New Forest. The whippers-in were : Harry Dawkins, who succeeded Hawtin as huntsman, W. Goodall (of whom mention has already been made), who afterwards went to the Belvoir, and Tom Smith, eventually huntsman to the Bramham Moor, a reserved but very capable servant who is still alive. These four men made a most efficient combination in the execution of hunt duties under Lord Henry's supervision. The exceptional abilities of W. Goodall and of Dick Burton, formerly with Mr. Osbaldeston, were undoubtedly



HARRY DAWKINS,
who succeeded Hawtin as huntsman



CHARLES HAWTIN,
Huntsman to Lord Henry Bentinck with the Buxton Hounds,
now at the Royal & County Show

responsible for the methods on which Lord Henry based his system of hunting hounds. Dick Burton will be remembered as a huntsman who declared that, with the exception of Rachel by Squire Osbaldeston's Rasselias, there was no nose he could trust to like Comus. In 1847 Lord Henry's kennel was full of Comus blood—a hard-running sort which needed a cross of line hunters. To this famous kennel of the best blood Sir Reginald Graham bears eloquent testimony.

Where (he says) are the descendants of Contest, Regulus, Damper, Dorimont, Vanquisher, Tapster, Sailor and Saladin ? Let those who have the blood value it as priceless. . . . When I was hunting in the New Forest in 1874, I had about 20 couples from Mr. Chaplin, and my bitch pack—known as the Fast Ladies—was in those days and again in the Hurworth country in 1886 composed of that blood.¹ I never knew one of them to tire. Who ever saw the pack when in Lord Henry's hands, and hunted by Charley Hawtin, can forget how at the end of the longest day they would cast themselves one or two fields in front of this huntsman and fling themselves at a gallop in a semicircle until they recovered the line ?

But at length the resources of Mr. Chaplin's once ample exchequer began to feel the strain. The financial burden of hunting a country six days a week called for retrenchment. His scale of expenditure rivalled even the profusion of Lord Chesterfield during his reign over the Pytchley : his *cuisine* evoked memories of the art and extravagance of Dolesio : his hospitality was boundless. Besides hunting there were the claims of Newmarket where Fortune, fickle jade, having once given him a Hermit, now denied

¹ An old General in the Forest used to say: "The Fast Ladies are too fast for me ! "

him any second edition of her favours. His circumstances were no secret : his indifference to economy was proverbial. At Trentham his habits provoked an amusing commentary by the Duke of Westminster at a dinner-table of large numbers. It was shortly after Mr. Chaplin's marriage to the Duke's niece. "When our Harry", said the Duke, "is broke, which is only a question of time, all the crowned heads of Europe ought to give him £100,000 a year in order that he may show them how to spend their money." This scene, the ducal atmosphere, the wit and extravagance of the statement might have come straight from the pages of *Lothair*, and, appropriately enough, for Brentham of the novel is Trentham of reality.

So Mr. Chaplin offered to resign his Mastership of the Hounds if some one willing to hunt six days a week could be found, or he would continue to bear the cost of some of the days if the funds for the other days were provided. The committee met at the Guild Hall in Lincoln in February 1870, and passed resolutions thanking him for the very liberal manner in which he had hunted the country, begging him to continue the Mastership of the Hounds and to hunt six days a week. They guaranteed £1000 for the ensuing season in order to ensure hunting six days a week, and they further undertook to find expenses to the amount of £500. It is not quite clear what followed ; but it would appear that Mr. Chaplin made certain proposals to the Committee ; among them that Lord Fitzwilliam should hunt that part of the country round Thonock on the Gainsborough side. To this Sir Hickman Bacon made objection and prevailed on two or three other members to support his

view of the situation. He wrote to Mr. Chaplin at the end of March and the secretary was instructed to do the same.

THONOCK, GAINSBOROUGH,
27th March '70.

MY DEAR HARRY—I have written a letter, through Toynbee, to you relative to the Burton country. Will you kindly let me have an answer, either officially or otherwise, as soon as possible. Time is getting on and any one taking the country ought to know at once, to enable him to get Hounds and Servants. I think it better to tell you that we do not wish to have Lord Fitzwilliam's hounds on this side again, by *we* I mean Sir T. Beckett, Sir C. Anderson, and myself; I do not know Hutton's feelings on the subject. Unless you are willing to give up a fair share of the open country, it would be useless offering a part of it to any one. If these woodlands are not regularly hunted and foxes preserved in them, there would soon be no foxes in the open. I saw F. Foljambe on Friday and he is ready to hunt that part of the Burton country named in my letter to Mr. Toynbee. Of course, this arrangement would only hold good until you or any one else might wish to hunt the Burton country 6 days a week in its integrity.—Yours sincerely in haste,

H. H. BACON.

LINCOLN,
27th March 1870.

SIR—I have submitted to each member of the Committee of the Burton Hunt a copy of your letter of the 14th instant and have received communications from several of them on the subject of it.

The tenor of these communications induces me to ask whether you would entertain the suggestion of giving up a part of the country and whether you would be willing to attend a meeting of the Committee to consider the whole question.

I have the honour to be, sir, your very obedient servant,

ROBERT TOYNBEE,
Hon. Sec.

H. CHAPLIN, Esq., M.P.

Sir Hickman Bacon spoke apparently for the minority. The following letter represented the prevailing sentiments of the Hunt.

GATE BURTON,
April 4.

DEAR CHAPLIN—I have had a letter from Hickman, enclosing his correspondence with you. I send you a copy of my answer which expresses all I have to say on the subject. If you should call a Committee meeting, I wish it could be postponed till Saturday the 23, as Moreland will be in Ireland till then. Hickman says he does not think of attending, tho' he suggests one. I am very much grieved at the position Hickman has placed us all in. For my part, my covers are entirely at your disposal, either for yourself, Lord Fitzwilliam, or anybody you may invite. I don't think I could do less for a man who has hunted the country so admirably as you have. . . .—Believe me, yours very truly,

W. HUTTON.

MY DEAR HICKMAN—I will send the correspondence to Anderson as you desire. I do not see any use in Moreland calling the Committee together now—it is too late. If it had been done before you wrote to H. Chaplin, some arrangement might have been made satisfactory to all parties. H. Chaplin would, I dare say, have given up Gawthorpe, Huckerby, Blyborough and Norton Place, and perhaps even Harpswell Wood and Brampton Holt as well as the Newark country, but I don't see how he could give up the rest you ask him. Lord Yarborough might also have been applied to for leave to draw Kirton gorse and the Lawton and Blyton covers.

I regret your determination not to have Lord Fitzwilliam—tho' he may not be all you like, he is surely better than nothing. I should have been glad of him. Matters certainly look bad for next season. I fear greatly that H. Chaplin may leave us, a most deplorable event.—Yours very truly,

W. HUTTON.

SIR H. BACON, Bt.

The result of it was that Mr. Chaplin did leave

them, as Mr. Hutton feared. In February 1871 he finally tendered his resignation, explaining he could not do justice to the country by hunting it only four days a week. The Committee met again and resolved that the country henceforth should be divided. Mr. Frank Foljambe took the northern portion, keeping the name of Burton; while under the new designation of the Blankney, Mr. Chaplin retained the southern division.

Mr. Chaplin sold Mr. Foljambe 18 couples of entered hounds, varying in ages from eight years to one year old, while Mr. Foljambe also bought $7\frac{1}{2}$ couples of unentered hounds. These 26 couples of hounds were the nucleus of Mr. Foljambe's pack.

II

Thus ended a famous Hunt and a brilliant Mastership. Henceforward Mr. Chaplin's responsibilities were with the newly constituted Blankney country. The Burton pack remained with him and for the future bore the Blankney title. He did not, however, assume the Mastership until 1877. Although the country was now hunted only four times a week, he found his Parliamentary duties too exacting to combine with the regular functions of Mastership. Accordingly, his brother, Colonel Edward Chaplin, took over the hounds, with Harry Dawkins as huntsman. The mating in the kennel Mr. Chaplin kept in his own hands. For the time the house at Blankney was practically closed and the Chaplin family made the Burghersh Chauntry house at Lincoln their hunting home. But in 1877 Mr. Chaplin was again in a

position to take over the pack and to hunt them himself—an arrangement which lasted until 1881. In that year Lady Florence died and in his sore trouble Mr. Chaplin transferred his hunting responsibilities to Major Tempest of Coleby, who acted as Field Master with a committee. In this way the country was hunted until 1885, when, for two seasons, Lord Lonsdale had the hounds. In 1888 Major Tempest took over the Mastership and continued it for nine or ten years. In July 1883 Lord Lonsdale formally acquired Mr. Chaplin's hounds. Their breeding was the very best and their reputation never stood higher. Thus, in the last year of Mr. Chaplin's ownership, Lord Portsmouth writes : "Ranter was by your Rackwood ; Richmond and his sister are wonders in work : Villager by your Vanquisher got rare stock—marvellous movers and very tough. All the Sailors are brilliant in work : Sovereign is the best shaped dog in the Kennel." Again, Mr. Jarvis of Doddington writes : "I should be so much obliged if you would let me buy 4 Rambler bitches from you. I should like to have them to breed from. I can never be sufficiently obliged to you for giving me such a good start with hounds. Old Councillor is worth his weight in gold." As late as 1906 Lord Charles Bentinck—then Master of the Blankney—writes : "Any hound I have here that has any quantity of blood of Tomboy, Contest and Derimont stands out in front of the others for dash, drive and perseverance."

Mr. Chaplin received £3500 for the pack, and the sale was recorded in a formally drawn agreement. The vendor must with sadness have put his signature to the document. At the same time, if the hounds



MELT OF THE BLANKNEY HOUNDS AT THE GREEN MAN ON THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY

H R H the Prince of Wales arriving with Mr Chaplin from the Brougham County, Lincoln, March 1870

Reproduced by permission from *The Illustrated London News*, March 12, 1870

were to leave him, it would be some consolation to receive such a letter as the following, which breathes the sympathy and deference of true sporting spirit.

BRIGSTOCK, THRAPSTON,
Sept. 12, 1883.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPLIN—I feel sure you will be glad to hear that I have started Cub hunting. I have had both dogs and bitches out. All enter well. . . . I must say when I had the honour of buying them I had no idea of how good or bad they were in their work, but I now think that I never knew what foxhounds ought to be, as with all their drive and dash they turn on a line and hunt closer than any hounds I have ever seen. They hunted 5 foxes and I have left them entirely to themselves and have killed 5 foxes. I have always brought them home when they kill as I am anxious to gain their confidence. I hunt (or rather look on at) dogs and bitches separately and they hunt wonderfully together. It is a pleasure to look at hounds hunting instead of what is called hunting hounds. I have avoided handling them at all at present, and if they lose their fox I sit there till they like to go and find it.¹ I want you to do me a favour. Will you at your earliest convenience come and have a hunt and explain a few things and set me right. I see by the hounds I do *something* they are not accustomed to—what it is, I know not, but I'll be bound it is so and you would see in a second, so do please let me have the benefit of your help. I have plenty of horses to mount you on.—Yours very truly,

LONSDALE.

P.S.—I am already tracing the pedigrees of dogs and bitches with a view to breeding, so that if you could bring the books with you which you so kindly promised me, I should be very much obliged. Will you let me know why Candid was not put to Rallywood, as from their style of

¹ In this he was paying the Squire the compliment of imitation, who in his turn was a pupil of the school of Lord Henry Bentinck. At the same time no one was quicker in his casts than Mr. Chaplin when he found his hounds at fault.

hunting, they would suit and there is no cross for four generations that I can find.

Such, in brief, is the history of Mr. Chaplin's hunting rule in Lincolnshire. Famous for his personal skill, the excellence of his stables and the scientific management of his kennel, he also bequeathed a name for intrepidity and endurance difficult to match. This story may now pass to some lighter features, here and there illustrative of the more personal aspects of the Squire's life during the halcyon days of his Mastership of Hounds, and of his subsequent hunting in the Shires.

Alike in his youth and in his old age, Mr. Chaplin knew no fear in the hunting-field. Many famous Masters have some special deed recorded to their credit, and perhaps the following may be entered to Mr. Chaplin's account. He was staying with Mr. Courtney Hall—then Master of the Holderness Hounds—from whom he was in the habit of buying horses. During a run the field came to a mill-dam with no way out. Apparently there was nothing for it but to go back and ride a good way round. Mr. Chaplin, however, set his horse at the lock, and jumped it clear. One of his companions on the occasion relates that the place was bricked up on both sides, and that on being measured subsequently it was found to be twenty feet without reckoning the "take off".

In his younger days Mr. Chaplin apparently was quite unmindful of fatigue. After a long hunt, lasting well into the afternoon, he thought nothing of making use of thoroughbred hacks and riding best pace to Brocklesby in time for dinner and a ball. Brocklesby is forty miles from Blankney and about thirty-four



LIFE, MILLER.
The horse on which Mr. Chaplin jumped the Mill dam.

miles from Lincoln. In those days hunting men went long rides on the roads. Lord Henry Bentinck, when he hunted the Burton country from Welbeck six days a week, used to ride the thirty miles out and the thirty miles home, having three hacks each way. Later on he moved to the White Heart at Lincoln before he took Monks' Tower from old Mr. Assheton Smith.

At the same time Mr. Chaplin turned to good use the railway when it suited him, although he did not use it according to the fashion of the ordinary traveller. For example, after a late sitting of the House of Commons he would engage a special train from King's Cross to take him down to a particular spot in the Burton country. By his direction the train would draw up in a cutting remote from any roadside station. From the train would then emerge a young gentleman in red coat and leathers. Up the bank he clambered, where his hack and groom were waiting for him on the top : and away he galloped to the meet of his hounds.

Nor did Mr. Chaplin spare his carriages in those days, when the motor was unknown. To ensure pace he would often drive a brougham himself. On one occasion he drove Lord Henry Bentinck from Lincoln to a place near Coleby. Inside sat Lord Henry. From the railway level crossing to the top of the hill, about one and a quarter miles, Lord Henry was observed to be counting ; in alighting he informed the young coachman that in that distance he had touched up the horses forty-five times ! Apparently Mr. Chaplin was no slave to punctuality. The residents in the Burton country averred that no Master ever travelled so fast to the meets. The hunt horses

drew him at full gallop. He would arrive at his destination in a brougham so plastered with mud that the glass was indistinguishable from the woodwork. Such performances did not always escape disaster. The meet was once at Stoneton Hall, some seventeen miles from Lincoln. The Squire had only allowed about forty-five minutes for the journey. He put his head through the window as they rattled along the street and shouted to his brother Ernest, who was driving, "Drive like —, we are d——d late." Almost the next moment the horses turned near their stables, and the Master found himself with them well inside the doorway of a shop !

Custance in his *Recollections* gives a graphic account of Mr. Chaplin in the hunting field in the year 1882. Mr. Chaplin was riding as hard as ever. He was out this day with the Cottesmore at Burley-on-the-Hill and the hounds went away towards Oakham. The Squire of Blankney was riding a big brown horse he had recently bought at Mr. Gerard Leigh's sale which was supposed to be one of the best horses in England. Custance continues, with pardonable pride in the prowess of his own horse, "he found his master when he tackled my mount the Doctor"; but admits, "the Squire was giving me 8 stone at least—he rode quite 18 stone and I about 10 ! The Squire was very anxious to see my old horse jump. Presently, I saw a real good bit of timber in the corner of a field and I went a little out of my way to jump it, which the old horse managed, but Mr. Chaplin met with misfortune." Custance then remarks, "It was a nasty fence and required a very bold horse and big jumper as well to clear it". The point that strikes one most

is that a horseman weighing 18 stone should take it on at all, or that a horse bold enough existed to face it, carrying this weight, with hounds running hard. As a matter of fact, the horse got too close to it, hit the top rail, shot Mr. Chaplin into the bank and landed on its back in the wide ditch. Good horseman as he was, he surely asked too much of his horse, but when his blood was up nothing stopped him. He had absolutely perfect hands and could ride any horse. He used tremendous bits, often double ports. Snaffle bridles were absolute anathema to him and no curb chain was ever tight. A horse was considered unfit to ride till it arched its neck and carried its head in its chest and could be reined on to its hind legs with a touch of the rein. He never let a horse hang on him or bore at him. However difficult, he always found a bit to suit it. He had snaffle bridles that he could convert into gags at will so that no one but himself should ride the horses in them. All his bridles were made with very long cheeks with the ring at the ends square with the horse, instead of the usual manner sideways. Till the end of his life, he used saddles with knee pads and, generally speaking (unless as in Custance's instance, when the horse was blown), he could make his horse take off when and where he liked. In this way he was known to jump fences which had wire through them, trusting to the horse responding to hand and rein. All his horses had to canter with him like park hacks and he rode several of them in running reins until they did. He would spend hours in the stable. He fed his horses with carrots and sugar and talked to them like dogs. But out hunting they had to go ; and he frequently got

to the bottom of several in one day, during the time he had hounds. He was a first-class horseman, which was all the more remarkable when his great weight and size are remembered.

Lord Hamilton of Dalzell was out one day with Mr. Chaplin when the hounds ran past a house called Whissenthorpe. The house was built in about the most likely and best line of country a fox would take, running either from Whissendene, the famous osier-bed by the brook of that name, to the Burton flats, or the reverse way. The house was in the centre of a large grass field, and as presumably the owner did not want to go to the expense of building an entrance lodge and also wanted to have the grazing rent of the rest of the field, he had made his carriage drive and surroundings into a kind of wire entanglement, leading from his gate to the house. The fox ran through these wire fences and the whole field was hung up. Mr. Chaplin was very indignant and asked Lord Hamilton what the place was. On hearing that it had actually been built as a hunting-box, he became even more indignant, "There should be no wire", said he, "anywhere about a hunting-box, except on the champagne bottles and that should be ready to come off at a moment's notice!"

A little before the date of which Custance writes the late Lord Willoughby de Broke has drawn an admirable picture of Mr. Chaplin. It appears that the Squire was on a visit to Compton Verney in order to have a day with the Warwickshire Hounds and to look at a horse which he thought might suit Lady Florence. Lord Willoughby thus describes his father's guest: "He was then in the very prime of life, and



Lord Lonsdale
on Whitehaven
Bankful
Comteess

Gleemadden
Guttleess
Captionous

Grayeling
Candid
Tulip

Susin
The Querk

Clock o' the North
Vintue
Suzin
Sybil

'THE BLANKNEY COUNCIL I'
Painted by W H Hopkins, 1885

when he came down to breakfast in his red coat—as men did in those days—tall, fair, well-proportioned, the picture of health, he was indeed a handsome specimen of the Anglo-Saxon race. . . . Mr. Chaplin was then at the zenith of his power and lifelong popularity. He was the Squire of Blankney. He was Master of the Blankney Hounds.” After a reference to his Parliamentary position, his influence and his hospitality, Lord Willoughby continues : “ Combined with this magnificence, his stature and good looks invested him with all the insignia that constitute a great personality, a personality that, in the language of the theatre, ‘ gets over the footlights ’.”

“ He was ”, wrote Lord Willoughby, “ one of the last, almost the last, of the fox-hunting country gentlemen who also wielded political influence, such as Lord George and Lord Henry Bentinck, and the fifth Lord Spencer. His appearance is too well known to need any detailed description. It has been said that no one was half so clever as Lord Thurlow looked. May we say that no one was half such a country gentleman as Henry Chaplin looked ? He possessed a strongly marked individuality, easily recognisable, familiar to the public. Every one knew him by sight.”

Lord Chaplin, continues Lord Willoughby, was “ an amazing instance of a popular man, and, in the estimation of a certain type of sporting farmer in the Midlands, he was in a class by himself. I was helping to judge Lord Lonsdale’s young hounds a few years before the war, with Lord Chaplin as my colleague. After luncheon, when he rose to respond to the toast of ‘ the Judges,’ all the puppy walkers quite spon-

taneously got up and roared out, ‘For he’s a jolly good fellow !’ and cheered him and cheered him again and again before he was allowed to speak. There he was. He was ‘the Squire’. He was their own Harry Chaplin, who loved the soil and the horses and the bullocks and the hounds and the hunting. He was part of them, and they were part of him ; they knew how he loved agriculture, and how he hated ‘Dicky Cobden’ and all his works, and they just took him to their hearts. It was on such occasions that Lord Chaplin made some of his happiest speeches. But although he was a well-known public figure, it was perhaps among a small party of friends that he gave his best value. No biographer, however skilful and well documented he may be, can really do justice to Lord Chaplin, because the most entertaining part of him is lost for ever. And that was his faculty of pulling out from a well-stocked and retentive memory so many interesting things about the many interesting people he had known, such as Disraeli and Lord George¹ and Lord Henry Bentinck among many others. He knew every one and had a peculiar *flair* for knowing all about every one, not necessarily personal gossip, but things of social and historical interest. And he could dish it all up so agreeably that it was always a delight to listen to him. One evening in particular, I remember. It was at Holmby House, twenty years ago. The party consisted of Annaly, Cecil Legard, Henry Chaplin, and myself. It was one of those little parties that just come by chance and, somehow, very often

¹ Lord Willoughby stretches a point here. Mr. Chaplin was hardly eight years old when Lord George Bentinck died.

seem to be of more value than those that are more carefully arranged. It was just the proper setting for 'the Squire'. I think it was mostly fox-hunting lore ; the memory fades, but I do remember that, beginning with the old original Goodall of the 'fifties, he expounded all the law and the prophets, and gave us an account of the old days at Blankney and the visit of the then Prince of Wales."

Lord Willoughby de Broke's reference to the then Prince of Wales gives occasion to recall a friendship continued from undergraduate days. The Prince not infrequently stayed with Mr. Chaplin, both at Burghersh Chantry and at Blankney. Few people seem to know that the late King as a young man found much pleasure in hunting. His grandson did not know that his grandfather ever went out hunting until in quite recent times when he was at Pitsford, hunting with the Pytchley, he heard of it from Lord Chaplin. On one occasion at Blankney, the Prince had as many as fourteen horses in the stables. Well mounted he rode hard, and on one occasion pounded the whole field as he jumped a very large stile in a bullfinch which his host in vain shouted at him to decline. Sometimes Mr. Chaplin would mount him, and no day was too inclement. Once H.R.H. was one of several guests at Burghersh Chantry. The meet was not far from Lincoln, and the hounds found at once at a place called Gill's Gorse. The Hunt was taken by surprise. Away went the Prince and the others. It was a tearing hurricane with snow driving in their faces, and they were almost blown from their horses. The first fence was stiff and nearly every saddle was emptied. Whether the Prince shared in

the general catastrophe is not recorded. On the way home that day he stayed to have tea with a celebrated old member of the hunt, Parson Howson of Brant Broughton, who was eighty years old. A short while before he had led the whole Belvoir field, on a four-year-old thoroughbred, sustaining three falls in the course of the run. His only remark at the end of the run was, "E's a made 'unter now"! Riding home late one night the Prince overtook Mr. Chaplin's younger brother, Ernest, who was leading his very tired horse and feeding it at intervals with grass by the roadside. Five years later he met Ernest Chaplin at the Ascot ball. The Prince had not seen him in the interval and in a moment he asked him whether he had been feeding any more horses with grass!

Custance the jockey also bears witness to the Prince's experience with the Burton pack. He writes : "I once had the honour of piloting H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in the hunting-field. This happened when his Royal Highness was on a visit to Mr. Henry Chaplin at the Chantry House, Lincoln, in 1871. The Squire was then Master of the Burton, and hunted the hounds himself—a very good gentleman huntsman he was ; I never saw a better amateur. He asked me to look after the Prince. I was unfortunate in not seeing the finish of that run, as the horse I was riding, belonging to Sir Frederick Johnstone, was injured. His Royal Highness and others were more fortunate, for the fox and hounds came back to meet them, when the field had been thinned by a very large drain which the Squire and myself were the only two to jump. At the moment I forgot the responsibility of my charge,

but had time to turn round and tell His Royal Highness that it was a very treacherous place, and luckily he did not chance it, as the only two others who did make the attempt both fell victims. It seems ridiculous to talk of a man riding at least seventeen stone topping the whole field, but that Squire Chaplin accomplished, and not only that, but hunted and killed the fox on the same horse—Emperor I.—who was the very best weight carrier I ever saw, and ridden by the best big man, in my opinion, that ever crossed a country.”¹

Mr. Chaplin’s hunting parties were never at a loss for amusement and sport. One day the hounds were stopped owing to fog, so all the party galloped for eight or nine miles straight across country home. One of them, Jim Farquharson, jumped over a stone wall and landed plump on the top of another wall going away at right angles! As Mr. Chaplin was in the habit of mounting many of his guests on his light-

¹ *Riding Recollections.* The illustration opposite page 232 represents a meet at the Green Man, which the Prince of Wales attended. “The Green Man was a famous old roadside tavern, eight miles from Lincoln on the road to Sleaford. This neighbourhood was formerly a tract of waste land known as the Lincoln Heath, and there used to stand an old light-house called Dunston Pillar, erected by Lord le Despencer, about 1750, to guide the traveller over the pathless plain at night. The Green Man was, during the last century, a notable place of assembly for the county gentry—they used to hold their monthly festive meetings in a spacious club-room, built in 1740 by Mr. Thomas Chaplin of Blankney, and adorned with the busts of the chief members of the club, and with all their names and arms, which were modelled in alabaster and placed within oval panels on the walls. Among them were Lord Tyrconnel of Belton, Captain King of Ashby, Mr. Robert Dashwood of Wellingore, and other leaders of jovial sport. Their ordinary recreation, as we are told by the Rev. Dr. Oliver in his *History of the Holy Trinity Guild at Sleaford*, consisted of a game of bowls before dinner, and a pipe of tobacco after dinner, with their claret or their punch, in the summer-house at the end of the bowling-green.”—*Illustrated London News*, 1870. The writer of the foregoing surely should have said “port” instead of claret. Mowbray of Grantham, the brewers at that time, used to supply “pipes” of port to all the local squires for miles around.

weight hunters, it is a matter of speculation how many were sound in wind and limb after these escapades. Mr. Chaplin seems to have enjoyed these cross-country rides, and to have gone the length of persuading the Royal Family to pursue this form of riding amusement. On one occasion, when hunting from Sandringham he played the ringleader and started off to pilot the party home across country, followed by Princess Victoria and the future Queen of Norway. The latter's horse fell with her in a field of roots and she found herself enthroned on the top of a turnip somewhat shaken, not to say bruised ! Mr. Chaplin, on this occasion, was taken to task by Queen Alexandra herself and admonished on his reckless behaviour in leading the Royal ladies astray. The best of it all was that during the gallop his own horse had pecked at a gap and he fell over its head to the accompaniment of shrieks of laughter from the Princesses. He lost his watch at the time and next day they all went to the spot, where it was found deeply embedded in the plough, Mr. Chaplin having fallen on it. Mr. Chaplin feigned great annoyance, and told Princess Maud it was to punish her for suggesting these cross-country rides home and causing him to fall off that they had been taken out to find his watch. But Queen Alexandra never lost her confidence in Mr. Chaplin's judgement in the matter of horses. She asked him to find her a hack with good manners and pleasant paces. The Queen loved riding and was no mean horsewoman ; and how lovely she looked on a horse ! The following letter is a valued family possession, natural, sensible and with a delightful touch of humour.

John Jeffrey
on Busy Bee

Earl of Lonsdale
on Whitehaven

Ben Capell
on Lord Malmion



Rallywo',
Poeman, Genius,
Shiven
Nathan
Benedict,
Gay Lad
General.
Woodman

THE BLANKNEY COUNTY II
After W H Hopkins,

SANDRINGHAM,

February 9th, 1891.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPLIN—I cannot say how much obliged I am to you for all the trouble you have taken about this horse, and it is indeed most kind of you having actually gone all the way down to Cheltenham yourself, and seen and tried the horse. I only waited to answer your first letter until you sent me the promised report of the Vet. Surgeon which I received this morning, and therefore hasten now to thank you for all you have done.

All you say about the horse seems first rate, and I do hope he will suit. I will certainly adopt your suggestion of sending "Prince" to see the horse and arrange with Chapman for me to try the horse here, and I hope his swelled knee will disappear by that time. I do not, of course, expect a second "Viva" as her equal doesn't exist, but at any rate all the points you name seemed excellent. As soon as I have seen and tried it, I will let you know how its paces suit me. The price, too, seems very moderate.

This morning at 9 o'clock I saw all our poor little two-year-olds off to Newmarket, packed up and tied down in the train. I was quite sorry to see them go, and they all knew me quite well—we have seen so much of them lately.

By the by, Mr. Gladstone referred to you in his speech last week as the *prop and pillar* of everything that deserved *to be overthrown and removed* (not flattering to say the least of it), but I hope you had not these evil intentions when you recommended me this horse to ride ! ! . . .

With grateful thanks for all the trouble you have so kindly taken.—Believe me, yours very sincerely,

ALEXANDRA.

The late Queen Victoria, too, corresponded with Mr. Chaplin about horses. She telegraphed to him in her distress about her horses, when they had an attack of pink eye at Balmoral in October 1899.

You were so kind about my horses that I know you will be sorry to hear that my distress and anxiety about them

seems to increase, as I have lost another and my favourite little black pony, who goes in my pony chair, and was tested with perfect success at Osborne at the end of July or beginning of August, but why it was again tested I cannot understand.

V. R. I.

Lord Willoughby de Broke has referred to the amusing experiences of Mr. Chaplin, and surely nothing can rival the following specimen of light comedy. Sir Augustus Harris, manager of Drury Lane Theatre, had settled to produce a sporting melodrama called "A Run of Luck". Sir Augustus was the author of the piece. Mr. Chaplin knew him quite well, and, as Sir Augustus was anxious to have for his play what he called "local colour", he was invited to Blankney to study the habits of hounds and the ways of hunt-servants on the spot. The first night of the play Mr. Chaplin sat in a box by the side of the author. He was almost as much concerned in the success of the play as the *impresario*, for a pack of hounds for the first time were to appear on the stage, and these had been lent by Mr. Chaplin as the most important "property" in the play. When the hounds appeared, cheer after cheer was raised by the audience, and Sir Augustus Harris turned proudly to Mr. Chaplin and asked him if everything was correct, huntsmen, clothes, hounds and all the rest of it. Mr. Chaplin fixed his eyeglass in his eye, and at once a look of horror spread over his face. "Good God, man!" he said, turning to the author, "the hounds have been fed!" "Oh yes," Sir Augustus said, "they have." "But they'll never catch anything while they are in that condition," rejoined the Squire. With difficulty Sir Augustus persuaded his friend that if they had not

been fed, not a hound would have remained on the stage, and that they would have been roaming all over the theatre ; instead of which Sir Augustus was able to point with pride to the pack, who, swelled out with porridge and meal, were lying about on the stage floor, contentedly licking themselves.¹

III

Mr. Chaplin hunted a good deal during 1904 and the following years with the Pytchley, staying with Lord Annaly at Holmby House. The Pytchley Hounds hunted later in the season than they do in the Shires now. Lord Spencer, who had been a most popular and efficient Master of the Pytchley, writes to thank Mr. Chaplin for news of an April Hunt. At that date, the Unionist Government was tottering to its end which came some nine months later ; and Lord Spencer knew that he was destined once again for political office. Loyal to his party, in his heart he preferred the coverts of the Pytchley to all the offices of Whitehall. The letter runs thus :

BORDIGHERA,
10 April, 1905.

MY DEAR HARRY—Your letter of the 3rd April from Holdenby gave me great pleasure. I like to hear of the Pytchley hunting and from no one so much as from you, who understand hunting thoroughly as few men who hunt do. I am sure you are right that no hounds can hunt which have not room, and Luke² makes room for them as well or better than any one I know. . . . Your account of the run, where the kill was near Holcot makes my mouth water. . . .

¹ The first performance of the play took place on August 29, 1886. When the play went on tour, a pack was hired from Hales.

² Lord Annaly, Master of the Pytchley.

I wonder whether you recollect a bye-day at Stanford Hall, when I hunted the hounds and we had a run and killed in the open after a good hunting run. I was riding Misrule, a grey mare, I recollect ; I always recollect it as you were close at hand all the run. . . .

I am sorry you had to sell the grey ;¹ he was a very great horse. I know how he galloped away from me one day at Scotland Wood. I hope I may get a little hunting next season. I had no wish to hunt this season, besides all the session I felt seedy.

You touch very pleasantly on politics. I expect you are right and that A. J. Balfour will pull through at present ; but I hardly think for long, as he leads a mixed crew and neither of the two sides of it seem keen to support him. The Government which follows will indeed have a difficult task. I fear I may belong to it ; but I devoutly hope not in the place it is now not unfrequently said I am to hold. I cannot throw up at such a time, but I often wish I could be quit of politics, but one must stick to the career one has chosen especially when one's party is fighting hard. I expect to be home next Sunday or Monday. I shall probably be at Spencer House ; pray look in at luncheon some day.

Thanking you again for your letter, believe me, very truly yours,

S.

How this letter suggests memories of the entertainment by Lord Spencer of his Liberal colleagues at Althorp. At dinner—Gladstone, Harcourt, and Morley, fussing over the ridiculous *crux* of Irish peers in a Home Rule scheme ; while the host—in Morley's language—"wore his red coat as Master of Hounds, and most picturesque he looked!" The next morning it was raining hard. Writes the Liberal statesman in his diary in the true cockney vein : "Spencer came into my room betimes in his pink to say good-bye.

¹ Whitebait, bought by the late Lord Londonderry. A difficult horse to ride, very hot, and with a funny mouth.

He was off on a fourteen mile ride to the Meet in the pouring rain. I envied such capacity for free enjoyment." But hunting, even in the rain, was inducement enough to Lord Spencer to quit the political society of his guests for the pleasant company of the covert side, and the hot chase of a Pytchley fox.¹

In 1907 Mr. Chaplin decided to hunt that autumn in Devonshire. He stayed at Larkharrow, near Exford, but both he and his horses found the hills rather a tax on them, and the climate was too enervating for his comfort. He naturally did not ride his heavyweight Leicestershire horses on Exmoor. It was recorded that on one occasion the Squire rode inadvertently into a bog, and instead of being alarmed was furious with his horse. Members of the hunt urged him to dismount at once. "Not at all," he said, "the great brute ! I shall sit on it to punish it !" When the punishment ended, it required an army of men and ropes to remove the pair.

In 1910 Mr. Chaplin had been able to lease a small house, the Hall Farm, Brixworth, Northamptonshire, which had been used as a hunting-box previously, with nice stables very handily situated at the back. Here Mr. Chaplin lived contentedly with a devoted man servant who had been with him for years, William Northwood. He was not only his valet, but his nurse, secretary (he taught himself to typewrite), and general manager as well. Mr. Chaplin was quite dependent on him and devoted to him, as well he might be—and William was regarded almost in the light of a son. If William agreed, all was well ; if

¹ See Morley, *Recollections*, vol. i. pp. 293-5.

William did not approve, the idea, whatever it was, was abandoned. It can truly be said that Mr. Chaplin had more enjoyment in this tiny little possession at Brixworth than almost at any time of his life. He was surrounded by all his pictures—those of his horses and his hounds ; pictures of the children and views of Dunrobin and Sutherland. Mr. Chaplin became quite an institution in the Pytchley country and his hunting teas were much sought after. He was a frequent guest at Holdenby, the late Lord Annaly being a particular friend of his. Lord Annaly never passed Brixworth¹ if the hounds had left off on that side, without stopping for tea, bringing with him a train of young people, all anxious to be introduced to the old "Squire". He was at Brixworth, on and off, until he died, except during the later years of the War, when he was hardly ever able to go there, having had to part temporarily with William, who was called up for service. During this period, when his health permitted it, he was mostly at Oakham.

The following is an interesting record of exertion for a man of his years. He writes to his daughter, Lady Londonderry :

¹ See a delightful reference to Mr. Chaplin at Brixworth in *Men and Horses I have known*, by the Hon. G. Lambton, p. 134. There is a graphic instance given of Mr. Chaplin's hard riding : "To see him thundering down at a fence on one of his great horses was a fine sight. I remember on one occasion we were all held up in a field close to Melton, the only way out being where a young sapling had been planted in the fence surrounded by an iron cage, which stood about 4 ft. 6 in., the thin tree growing up several feet above it. There were shouts for a chopper or a knife, when down came the Squire, forty miles an hour, with his eyeglass in his eye, seeing nothing but the opening in the fence. There was no stopping him ; neither did the young tree do so, for his weight and that of his horse broke it off as clean as you would break a thin stick, and away he went without an idea that the tree had ever been there."



MR CHAPLIN AND LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE
Judging Lord Lonsdale's foxhound puppies at Bailey Thrope, Oakham, a few years before the War

STAFFORD HOUSE,
25th March 1911.

When the House was up yesterday, I went down to Leicester, slept at the Bell, got up at 6 to see 2 horses belonging to a 19 stone man I know well in the Quorn country, one out of a mare they swear is got by Hermit out of one of Charlie Hawtin's (my huntsman) favourite animals, an Irish mare called Miss Sullivan that I gave to one of the tenants, Marly, at the Temple. I didn't buy that, though he has great merit and is to be bought cheap, but I bought the other—an Irish horse, up to 18 stone good, 6 years old and cheap too. Caught the 7.20 train to London and arrived in time for a meeting at A. J. B.'s house in Carlton Gardens, which lasted nearly 3 hours, when I hope we didn't do much harm.

But he was riding far too hard for a man of his age—he was over seventy—and weight.¹ His knees had become so bad with arthritis and gout that he had very little power of pressure or grip left. This particular season he had gathered together a really good stud of six animals—amongst them being a fast brown horse by Whisperer, up to any weight (which fetched £400 at his sale); a beautiful dark chestnut, named Dr. Jack, which he bought in Wales from

¹ Mr. Chaplin was always prepared to laugh about his weight and figure. Frequently in later life, when, owing to his hands being rather gouty and a little shaky, he spilt large quantities of food on his front, instead of placing his napkin at his neck, he would stick it in half-way down his coat. He one day appealed to Lord Hugh Cecil, who was with him, to observe what had happened to him. Eying the formidable mass of potato lodged on his person, Lord Hugh remarked, "I always understood it was the apex of the salient that should be guarded." Again, later on, observing Lord Hugh reclining full length on a sofa, resting his book on a cushion in front of him, Mr. Chaplin remarked, "What an idea to place a cushion there!" "Oh!" said Lord Hugh, "I accomplish by art what you effect by nature." On another occasion out hunting, seeing his son-in-law, Castlereagh (who was as thin as a rail with a very good figure), on his horse, in the regulation swallow-tailed coat, he rode up to him and asked, "Who is your tailor, Charlie? You've got on a very smart coat—damned if I don't order one for myself"!

a doctor named Jack Lloyd; his favourite old white horse given him by his brother; and a splendid chestnut horse full of quality, bought from Mr. Cook, the Master of the Staghounds in Sussex. He also had a hot, fiery-tempered horse from Steeds, the dealer, not at all suitable for any one hunting under physical difficulties, as he then was. The result was that, having found and been given these really good horses who were up to his weight, he was tempted when mounted on what he termed "one of the old sort, who would face anything" to have a "go" as of yore. One day Mr. Chaplin was riding Mr. Cook's chestnut and the obstacle before them was a large upstanding boundary fence. The horse made a terrific spring and landed well into the middle of the next field, which luckily was plough. A magnificent jump, but too much of a spring for Mr. Chaplin to retain his seat. He was unseated, the plough partially breaking his fall.

The first person to give assistance was Count Kinsky, who won the Grand National on Zoedone and who was a close personal friend of Mr. Chaplin. Like most of his race he was lithe, wiry, and slim, and not by any means a big man. His description of his efforts to get his arms round the Squire was both comic and pathetic. He endeavoured to raise him and encircle him in his arms, but, as he said, "What would you?—I could but grasp a fraction of that huge frame".¹ Mr. Chaplin broke two ribs. He made quite light of it in his replies to anxious inquiries, informing King George, in reply to His Majesty's kind

¹ Once hunting with the children and the North Stafford Hounds Mr. Chaplin took a cropper into a boggy ploughed field. Breathlessly and seriously alarmed, the family asked if he was all right. "Quite," came the reply, "but I must wait and see whether I haven't burst"!

telegram the day it happened, that the accident was not serious. Queen Alexandra, always so graciously sympathetic, learning next day that the accident was more serious than previously stated, telegraphed to him for news.

Am so dreadfully sorry that you should again have had bad accident out hunting, and just after our talk too ; you are by far too plucky and I fear you must now be in great pain with two broken ribs ; please let me hear how you are getting on.

ALEXANDRA.

With that strong sense of Parliamentary discipline which he always retained, on the way home after the accident he insisted upon stopping at the first village they came through in order to send a telegram to the Whips' Room to say how sorry he was that he could not be in his place to vote that evening in the House of Commons. As might have been expected, complications set in. The broken ribs had pierced a lung, and he had a very serious illness.

Always quite unlike any one else, the Squire when ill had notions peculiar to himself. To begin with, and this fact undoubtedly saved his life, it was impossible to put him to bed. He sat up the whole time (a month) in a huge arm-chair, which eased his breathing considerably. From here he issued orders to his two nurses, whom he designated "the Day Girl" and "the Night Girl". The former having remonstrated with him about doing something quite unusual for a patient suffering from pneumonia, he was heard to say to the nurse, "The Night Girl has learnt that she must do as I tell her, and the Day Girl must also learn!" The patient grew worse, and his personal friend, Sir Alfred Fripp, one of the

great surgeons of the day, volunteered to come down and see him and advise what should be done. Mr. Chaplin, however, considered himself better and thought he was not having sufficient nourishment. He said he must see his cook himself—and he did. The cook, wishing to please him, informed him that he had been sent a goose and that there was also a hare and a snipe. Mr. Chaplin said he would have them all. At this moment Sir Alfred arrived. Lady Castlereagh was already there, having motored over in a hurry on hearing of Mr. Chaplin's condition. The nurse had asked her not to go in, as she was not expected until later in the day and she did not wish to arouse Mr. Chaplin's suspicions. "What are we to do ?" said Lady Castlereagh, "my Father has ordered a goose, a hare, and a snipe, and refuses to listen to the nurse, and his condition is very grave." Sir Alfred, who had been looking at the chart, agreed and passed into Mr. Chaplin's room. He was greeted most cheerily by Mr. Chaplin and bidden to stay to lunch and told what the menu was. When he came back to Lady Castlereagh, he said, "Leave your father alone. He can't be treated like an ordinary mortal and if I may say so, he has a royal courage and a royal stomach. It is a case of kill or cure." At that moment, Mr. Chaplin called through the door for Sir Alfred, who returned to the sick-room, and reappeared shortly choking with laughter. "Your father ", he said, "sent for me to say that if I would prefer him not to eat all these things, he would give up the snipe !! "

IV

This chapter draws to a conclusion. Time went on ; the war came and the face of England changed. But the Squire remained the Squire. He still went about looking at horses he could ride and meditating all the enjoyment of the hunting-field, even though his physical conditions were almost prohibitive of riding. In the evenings of his old age he talked at length of horses he had ridden—Snowstorm¹ perhaps the best he ever had. He could leave the field standing still at any time. One great day the hounds ran seven miles in twenty-three minutes, and what horse but he could have lived through that hunt, carrying 18 stone ? The hounds raced through Coleby Gorse, Boothby, Navenby, Wellingbore, and Welbourne to Leadenham Hill top. There they changed foxes and ran another six miles, getting him to ground in the Belvoir country at Sparrow Gorse. Snowstorm was a brilliant animal in every way ; bought as a hunter stallion and sound as a bell himself ; but, strangely enough, all his stock became roarers. Mr. Chaplin exchanged him for another called Outfit ; and this horse, though not sound in his wind, bred hunting stock of the first class.

Lord Chaplin was eighty, and he writes to his daughter that she is to tell her husband (Lord Londonderry) that he is going to send for a companion for "Grouse", "another white horse I have known of for 4 years and that is now to be sold by a Northamptonshire farmer who would never part

¹ Snowstorm was foaled in 1863 and was by Lord Fauconberg—dam by Professor Buck, granddam by Dardanelles out of Miss Horner by Filho da Puta out of Jenny Horner. Snowstorm ran in the Grand National of 1872 ; but he made no show in the race.

with him before". Lord Lonsdale is quoted as having seen him out with the Pytchley, and thinking him "the horse of all others for me nowadays"; and so he rambles on until he pulls himself up: "Dear me, what an old fool I am—but about horses and hounds I always shall be, I believe, so long as I can get on a horse at all." Six months later it is the same story. "I had a long journey yesterday into Norfolk and back again, same day, to see a number of horses, in the hope of finding one for myself, which in these days must be long and low and very near the ground, for if I have to get off anywhere in the field I can only get on again by putting him in the ditch. However, they were all much too tall and useless to me. So now I am off to-morrow to Brixworth to see if the Drage family can produce anything suitable at Chapel Brampton—and then, with intervals, for Newmarket, I hope to get some exercise riding till we come up for the meeting of Parliament." At a date a little later, Mr. George Drummond of Pitsford was entertaining the Prince of Wales, and he writes to Lady Londonderry with an example of Lord Chaplin's *grande manière*. They were cub-hunting and the Prince of Wales was there. . . . "Two inches," said Mr. Drummond, "is the most we can remove our hats nowadays, and it was an education, after watching several shamefaced attempts to give the correct submission, to see the Squire come along and riding straight up to the Prince make his obeisance, sweeping off his hunting cap until it was pointing to the ground by his horse's flank."

But the Squire is slowly recognising the infirmities of age. Thus he writes to the Duke of Portland from



WITH THE COTTESMORE HOUNDS

Season 1921-22

Barleythorpe : " I have only been out one day myself and then I became alive to a very disagreeable fact—my sight (due to bad nights, I think, chiefly) has become so much worse that I can barely see the hounds in the next field, whereas, when I succeeded to your relative¹ at Lincoln and bought his famous pack, I could see what hound it was running at head 3 fields away. However, I have no right to complain and Anno Domini has probably to do with it."

He had a severe operation when he was eighty-two years of age from which he reached only a certain stage of temporary convalescence. He was at Londonderry House, and one afternoon he gave every one the slip. At length at 6.30 in the evening Lady Londonderry's chauffeur telephoned to say that Lord Chaplin was at Cobham. He had gone there to see the stud. Too feeble to get out, he remained seated in the car and the horses were led out for his inspection. On his return home, he was greatly fatigued ; but he had evidently enjoyed the expedition. His mind wandered rather in conversation after dinner, and he confused some references to Lord Curzon's record in Parliament with the achievements at the stud of one of the horses he had seen at Cobham.

To the end it was horses. If he were not writing or talking about horses he was drawing them on paper. In his House of Commons days he made pictures of horses on his copy of the Order Paper and, generally, during the sittings of a Committee. As a Minister he used to leave lying about on the Cabinet table little sketches of horses he had made which the Principal Private Secretary would ultimately clear away with

¹ Lord Henry Bentinck.

the ordinary *reliquiae* of the meeting. This, of course, was years before the degenerate invention of a Cabinet Clerk with all his official paraphernalia.

When Lady Londonderry went to his room to collect and take care of his things during his operation at the nursing-home next door, she found on the sofa the library of his daily use—his Bible, the Racing Calendar, and the Parliamentary Guide.

v

To Lord Chaplin himself shall be left the task of concluding this chapter. During the War, Sir Arthur Pearson asked him to dine one evening to meet the gallant blind of St. Dunstan's. After dinner there was an adjournment to another room. Lord Chaplin inquired of his host what he wished him to do. "Do you want me," he said, "to make a speech? I can talk about sport. I can talk about racing. I can talk about politics."

"Politics," exclaimed the men, "that's the last thing we want. Let's have your experiences of hunting."

Thereupon the Squire rose and, to the delight of the poor fellows, who turned towards him with their blind and eager faces, told them the following story.

A HUNT WITH THE BURTON

After a very long day, latish in the year, I did not get home till 8.30 on a Saturday night and found a man waiting to see me at the Burghersh Chantry. I inquired of my servant, "What is the meaning of the man being here?" "Oh, he has been waiting here since 4 o'clock to see you

and he says he *must* see you." "Well," I said, "show him into my study." I went there without changing my things, to find a capital old fellow who had a farm some six miles from Lincoln, and he said, "You know, Squire, I have been waiting to see you all these hours because I have got a fox who lives on my farm and takes from me a lamb every morning and every night. I shall be broke if this goes on. You really must come and kill him." I told him I'd come the moment I could but that the appointments were fixed for the next fortnight. "Lord ! Squire," he said, "if I wait another fortnight, I shan't have a lamb left." I thought for a moment, and I said, "Will you swear to me that if I come at daybreak on Monday morning you'll find this fox ?" "Yes," said he, "he has never missed a day or a night for a fortnight." "Done," I said ; "I will be there as soon as it is light on Monday morning. Meet me at a certain lane's end, close to your farm—I'll be there with a pack." (I should tell you there was a regular meet somewhere else at 11 o'clock that morning.)

I sat down, and got my hound book and marked 14 couples of bitches by name, my best bitches, nothing over four years old, all of which were to be ready. I sent a note over with the marked hound list then and there, and said, "Feed these 14 couples as early as ever you can, at 5 or 6 to-morrow morning (Sunday)," adding, "If they (the bitches) are all right in the morning, send only the 12 couples which I have marked with two crosses."

Then off I went to the meet. I ordered my two horses for myself and I had two whippers-in and horses for them. It was so dark and misty at the hour I appointed, that we had to wait for an hour for light. Then I went round the farm with this old fellow and the hounds, and we got to the very last field and to within 100 yards of the hedge in the last field. That was a hedge that ran straight for 4 miles, a little low hedge of the Lincoln Heath, and then we came to the boundary fence of his farm ; and when we were within a hundred yards of this fence, I said, "Now, look here, you brought me out at this ungodly hour and you have not

found the fox yet." I cracked my whip for the last time, when up jumped my friend not 20 yards to my left and not 50 yards from the hedge. The hounds all saw him, but the fox turned sharply to the left and ran straight up the side of the hedge. The hounds, having seen the fox, were looking for him with their heads up and ran for 200 or 300 yards up the rising ground on the other side of the hedge. I sat quite still and cracked my whip twice and they all swung back to the hedge, caught the line, and away they went, a little up wind, so that they really smelt the fox himself, he was so close to them. For at least four miles they went up this single straight hedgerow, with no one to head him at that hour, as hard as they could drive, going together so that a sheet would cover them.

At the end of some four miles, we crossed the Lincoln and Brigg road and got on the grass on the side of what we called "the Cliff" running down from the Lincoln Heath to the vale below. I was riding a horse I had bought from Jack Thompson, who was Master of the Pytchley for many years. It came up at Tattersalls and I bought it for Lord Hartington. It was not really up to my weight but I knew I could not be very wrong in buying it. Lord Hartington's groom said it would never do for his Lordship, as it tossed its head too much, so I kept it for myself. Well, I assure you, although he was a thoroughbred horse, it was all I could do to keep up with the hounds till we crossed this road.

The moment we crossed the high road, it was grass all the way to Lincoln, if he turned the right way. Before we had gone 300 yards down the hill, the fox had turned to the left and was running straight to Lincoln. "Now," I said, "my friend, I have got you"; because in Lincolnshire, which is, generally speaking, a plough country, the hounds could always run on the grass. Away we went, pointing to Burton and the Lincoln race-course beyond. They ran faster and faster every minute. We got to the Lincoln race-course. Off the race-course, they got on to what is known as the Lincoln Common, straight up the hill again, which we had got down before, and as they flew over the Common I saw

my friend, hardly able to crawl, just going through a hedge out of sight into a little lane there was at the top of the hill, quite close to the town. Three minutes afterwards we had run him up to the Castle in Lincoln, and I killed him at the very edge of the Castle walls, 250 yards from my own house in Lincoln. . . .

I had his head off and gave it to my second horseman when he arrived. I sent it to the old farmer by a hack the same morning and I believe he got glorious after his midday meal. My horse was called "Fountain" and at the end of that gallop there was he, standing with his four legs stretched out, his head hanging down and his tail swinging up and down like a pump handle—nothing left in him whatever.

I went and had my breakfast, as it was close to my house. There was a meet that day, the regular meet, at a place called Hackthorn. I never had a worse day in my life. Though we found several foxes, and the hounds were all doing their best with their noses tied to the ground, they could do nothing but walk after them. The reason for the burst in the morning was that he ran perfectly straight for four miles to begin with, up wind, with the hounds close behind him and then we got on the grass for the last five. They could always run on the grass any day in Lincolnshire and he could never get away from them.

V

DEERSTALKING

The wild Deer, wandering here and there,
Keeps the Human Soul from care.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

THE great majority of his countrymen and even of his friends regarded Mr. Chaplin as the complete type of the English squire. But he was only half an Englishman. On the distaff-side Highland blood flowed in his veins, through his mother, who was an Ellice, and his maternal grandmother, who was a Ross. It may be that his curious charm of manner and his singular gift for friendship with every type of man was partly due to his Highland descent.

His mother was named Caroline Horatia, after her uncle, Horatio Ross. A digression must be permitted upon this almost legendary figure in Scottish sport. He was the son of Hercules Ross, who left Scotland for Jamaica in 1761, made there a considerable fortune, and returned in 1799 to build Rossie Castle near Montrose. Hercules was an intimate friend of Lord Nelson, and many letters between them are preserved. We find him in May 1801 writing to congratulate Nelson upon his achievement at Copenhagen :

What can I say, in addition to what has been proclaimed to the world by the Legislature of your country and re-

echoed through every quarter of the Globe ? I will tell your lordship what I say—I am highly gratified, and, beyond the power of language to express, proud of your friendship. Continue then to gratify still further your old friend by a few lines now and then, when retrospection of former days shall occasionally be allowed a place in relief of your mind from the important duties of your high and honourable situation.

He goes on to ask Nelson to be godfather to the child which his wife is expecting, and begs him to come and stay at Rossie. “ Your lordship emphatically calls for ‘ relief of your shattered carcase ’—shattered indeed, I fear, and only held together by the noble mind. With us you would find, I solemnly believe, what would delight every fancy and suit the desire expressed in your letter.” Nelson accepted the duty of godfather, and in September was duly informed of the birth of a son and heir. He replied :

AMAZON DOWNS,
Sept. 12, 1801.

MY DEAR FRIEND—I congratulate you most sincerely on the birth of a son and heir, and from my heart I wish all the wealth and happiness you possess and all the honours which have fallen to my lot may be the young Horatio’s. Sir William and Lady Hamilton are with me, and as they have been partakers with me of the hospitality of Mrs. Parish when at Hamburgh, they desire to join me in good wishes for Mrs. Ross’s speedy recovery.

Whatever call the public duty has to my services I must not altogether forget the duty of private friendship. You do not think me capable of forgetting when your house, carriages and purse were open to me, and to your kindness probably I owe my life, for Green Bay had very often its jaws open to receive me ; but as money never was my object, so I am not much richer than when you knew me except by my pensions. No, the two Parkers have had the sweets of Jamaica, but I

would not change with them. I pray God we may have peace when it can be had with honour, but I fear that the scoundrel Bonaparte wants to humble us as he has done the rest of Europe, to degrade us in our own eyes by making us give up all our conquests as proof of our sincerity for making a peace, and then he will condescend to treat with us—he be damned, and there I leave him ; and do you believe me, ever my dear Ross, your old and affectionate friend,

NELSON & BRONTE.

I must beg the favour of you to give the enclosed to the Nurse.

The young Horatio,¹ though destined to be a famous shot, was at first shy about firearms. When about six years old, the Volunteer regiment of which his father was Colonel was about to receive new colours. and the father was anxious that, in his absence, his small son should present them. But when a salute was fired Horatio was badly scared and bolted into the house. This so annoyed the father that he ordered his valet to fire several times over the child's head every day, so as to accustom him to powder, with the result of making the boy infinitely more nervous. At last one day the old valet got Horatio to fire the gun himself, a sparrow fell to the shot, and from that moment the child was never so happy as when he had a gun in his hands. He was obviously no longer gun-shy when he went to his first school, which was about the time of the marriage to William Ellice of his eldest and much loved sister Harriet, the future grandmother of Henry Chaplin. He writes to his father in London : “ Tell Harriet I wish to be an uncle. I have waited

¹ Horatio Ross (1801–1886), retired from the Army in 1826 ; M.P., Aberdeen 1831 and Montrose 1832–34 ; captain of Scottish team for the Elcho Shield, 1862, and took part in the match five times.



MRS W. ELLICE, *nee* HARRIETT ROSS
PAINTED AT EAST SHEEN, 1822, BY G HOLMES

seven months. I am disappointed still. I can wait no longer. I have shot nine crows, but I am forbid to shoot them now because they eat the worms. I have been sick with eating green gooseberries which are fit for pies." He was gazetted to the 14th Light Dragoons and rose to the rank of captain.

His sporting achievements in Scotland have, as I have said, become almost legendary. He lived before the days of the great grouse moors. "I never," he once told a friend, "tried to make a big bag of grouse in a day. I think 65 brace was the largest I ever shot." But he lived also before the days of modern deerstalking with carefully delimited forests, and some of his records are amazing. In 1828 he rented a moor from the Duke of Atholl and shot 87 deer to his own rifle. "I was always up at 3 A.M.," he said, "and seldom back at the lodge before 7 or 8 P.M., walking, running, or crawling all the time." In 1851 he shot 118 stags in Mar Forest, killing in one day 13 with fourteen chances. In 1837 he killed 75 deer in Sutherland on Ben Armine and Creag Riabhach. In that county he seems to have been a tenant of what is now the Ardross shooting, and to have got into trouble over the number of grouse that he shot. He was not too popular a tenant, for he and his keepers were accused of introducing a swarm of rabbits to the estate, and of encouraging poachers without a licence to shoot grouse for the pot. Indeed, Horatio Ross had always a good deal of the poacher in his composition. He was nicknamed "the poacher of the North", for he loved to get a stag just over his neighbours' march.

Like all the great sportsmen of that day, he was a magnificent walker, though he modestly disclaimed

any attempt to rival such heroes as Captain Barclay of Urie. Here, however, is his own account of a walk for a wager.

I never attempted any pedestrian feat. I was always a first-rate walker for a "long pull", but do not believe I could have done anything worthy of notice as to pace when compared with professionals, even if I had tried, which I never did.

To the same correspondent, however, he gives an account of twenty-four miles in four hours, and six miles, fair toe and heel, in fifty-six minutes—"far from bad work, we think!" Talking about pedestrianism, he then describes a match which is a striking illustration of the desperate energy of the sportsmen of a bygone age:

A large party were assembled at Black Hall in Kincardineshire, which then belonged to Mr. Farquharson, time the end of July or beginning of August. We had all been shooting snipe and "flapper" ducks in a large morass on the estate called Lumphanon. We had been wading amongst bulrushes up to our middles for 7 or 8 hours, and had had a capital dinner. After the ladies had gone to the drawing-room, I fell asleep, and about 9 o'clock was awakened by the late Sir Andrew Leith Hay, who said, "Ross, old fellow, I want you to jump up and go as my umpire with Lord Kennedy to Inverness. I have made a bet of £2500 a side that I get there on foot before him." Nothing came amiss to the men of that day. My answer was "All right, I'm ready"; and off we started there and then, in evening costume, with, as was the custom then, thin shoes and silk stockings on our feet. I am afraid to say how far it was to Inverness. You can look at the River Dee, and find a village called Banchory, which is near Black Hall, and then draw a line to Inverness. We went straight across the mountains, and it was a longish walk. [We have been given

to understand that over the Grampian range, the straightest path that could be walked would be 90 miles ; we have been told 98.]

I called to my servant to follow with my walking shoes and worsted stockings, and Lord Kennedy did the same. They overtook us after we had gone 7 or 8 miles. Fancy my disgust ! My idiot brought me certainly worsted stockings, but instead of shoes, a pair of tight Wellington boots. My language, I am afraid, was more expressive than elegant. His excuse was that my shooting shoes were damp from wading in the morass in the day time ; so that I had to make the best of it with the Wellingtons. The sole of one boot vanished 25 miles from Inverness, and I had to finish the walk barefooted.

We walked all night, next day and next night, raining torrents all the way. We crossed the Grampians, making a perfectly straight line, and got to Inverness at 6 A.M. We never saw or heard of Sir A. L. Hay (he went by the coach road, via Huntly and Elgin, 36 miles further than we, but a good road) who appeared at 10 A.M., and who was much cast down at finding he had been beaten. I, however, told him that to the best of my belief he had won his bet. My duty was simply to look on and report what I had seen, and it so happened Lord Kennedy, then a good deal beaten, had leaned on the arm of his attendant in descending and ascending the hills. It was decided that the question should be referred to the great authority, on pedestrianism, Captain Barclay ; but ultimately Lord Kennedy and Sir Andrew Leith Hay privately agreed to drop it. Barclay afterwards told me he should have given his decision in favour of Sir A. L. Hay.¹

It is not surprising that with such a strain in his ancestry Mr. Chaplin grew up a proficient shot with the rifle. In later life, when his weight made walking on the hill exceedingly arduous, he made almost

¹ Horatio Ross's younger son, Edward, as a Volunteer, was the first to win the Queen's Prize at Wimbledon in the 'sixties.

superhuman efforts to continue the sport—a singular proof of devotion. No man of over sixteen stone would have persevered on stony hills and through deep mosses unless a passion for the game lay deep in his heart. Being a devotee of so many sports he had to concentrate his stalking each year in a very few weeks. Racing detained him at Doncaster till the second week of September, and before the stalking season was quite over he was hunting in Lincolnshire or racing at Newmarket. In his young days Mr. Chaplin spent much of the autumn at Glen Quoich with his great-uncle, Edward Ellice. His first visit was for a month in 1859. A delightful visitor's book was kept there in which the guests were bidden to chronicle their complaints. Mr. Chaplin's was that "the loch was sometimes too deep to be pleasant". In 1860 Prosper Merimée was of the party and did a caricature of Mr. Chaplin, which hung for many years at Glen Quoich, and has since been given by Major Edward Ellice of Aberchalder to Lady Londonderry. Mr. Chaplin is depicted as a giant stepping from one mountain peak to another, his rifle on one shoulder and a diminutive stag protruding from his pocket. In the complaint book that year was the following poem by J. L. Motley :

THE COMPLAINT

Bitter the Bread—
So Dante said
One eats at Strangers' banquets
And ill he fares
Who goes upstairs
To sleep in Strangers' blankets.



CARICATURE OF HENRY CHAPLIN, AGED 19,
BY PROSPER MERIMEE, AT GLEN QUOICH

But I opine
The Florentine
Who thus in strains heroic,
Bewailed his lot
Had quite forgot
His sorrows at Glen Quoich.

Too sweet the bread
Too soft the bed
Within these fields Ellice-an
Where even saints,
Who make complaints,
Would merit deep derision.

So I decline
To fret or whine,
Though charming Mrs Ellice
With artful look
Presents her book
And bids each stranger tell his
Complaints and woes,
For well she knows
That cynic, sage or stoic
Could only grieve
When forced to leave
His Hosts and sweet Glen Quoich.

In 1862 Mr. Chaplin was again at Glen Quoich, this time with Richard Cobden as his companion. Mr. Cobden's entry in the complaint book is worth quoting :

That so much happiness as is disclosed in these papers should have been enjoyed by those inhabiting this dreary region, without a neighbour, or even the primitive resources of butcher, baker, grocer or tailor, into which gas and other modern improvements have failed to penetrate, and for which George Stephenson, Professor Wheatstone, and Rowland Hill have laboured in vain, a region where learning, science, and religion find no representatives in lawyer, physician or clergyman, and which agriculture has abandoned to the dominion

of the wild animals of the chase—that a community should be content and happy whilst thus deprived of the benefits of civilisation is a lamentable instance of the triumph of barbarism.

Should a desire be awakened for a better state of things, I beg to offer my services, as agitator on the spot, for the reform of these manifold grievances, any time between the months of May and December.

When Mr. Chaplin succeeded his uncle at Blankney he determined to acquire a forest for himself. His adviser in this as in all other matters was Lord Henry Bentinck. “I may add,” he wrote in after life, “that it was from Lord Henry that I learned everything I ever knew—about horses, hounds, deerstalking, deer forests, and sport of all kinds, and a great deal about polities too.”¹ When Lord Henry lived at Tathwell, one of Mr. Chaplin’s houses in Lincolnshire, he used to practise shooting arduously all the summer with a pea rifle at rabbits and hares. In Scotland he lived at Loch Ericht, a lodge in the famous forest of Ardverikie, stalking Ben Alder and the adjoining country, which he leased from Sir John Ramsden. In August 1864, anxious to distract his friend’s mind from the blow which he had received by the elopement of Lady Florence Hastings, he wrote a series of letters to Mr. Chaplin on the science of deerstalking, from which some quotations may be made, since they give a picture of deerstalking in the heroic age. Some of the letters are written from Inchryory in Banffshire, which Lord Henry used to take for grouse shooting, and in addition he had the deer forest of Glenavon which marches with Mar, in which latter forest he also stalked if the wind suited :

¹ See p. 31.

I never had more birds, but wilder than any hawks on the 12th—seeing from 1500 brace to 2000 go clean away 1100 yards before the dogs. I provided Cecil¹ with some young birds whilst I remained at Inchry, but their wildness sickened me in six days, and I took again to Purdy's new tools. They are wonderful implements—the little balls most deadly—no deer cleanly hit will get away. I began diffidently trying them at roe buck—2 roe—the first at 70 yards dropped stone dead. The second turned round to look for her companion at 180, and dropped on the spot. Then tried some Hinds—killed the first—lying down dead; the second running straight away was only slightly grazed, but stopped and the dogs took her. The third looked round at 170 and dropped dead. The first stag was hit slovenly, far back, but he lay down immediately, and when startled lay down again within a hundred yards. The second was hit no better, but dropped dead to the second barrel. The third never moved. On the fourth day I had a very respectable day's work, and a perfect trial of the gun. A good chance at a heavy beast 100 yards, ran that distance and dropped dead. Then had a very successful and exciting stalk, threaded 100 hinds first from Mar and crawled up to 7 beasts, 3 only worth their allowance. The two first dropped stone dead within 10 yards of each other. The third bolted down the brae, but turning up showed himself at 190 to 200 yards. Taking the 100 yards sight full and aiming at the top of the shoulder, the ball went in at the very spot and the beast never stirred. I never saw five deer consecutively killed so dead.

The next day, after a little grouse shooting, I got up to a good lot of deer and lay down by them, when they suddenly jumped up. I got off 3 barrels—two beasts ran a hundred yards and died. The third dropped to the shot and lay for some time, hit on the top of the shoulder, but got up again and took refuge in the sanctuary—the only beast I lost in the first 8 stalks, getting 11 good deer—9 stone dead. The little balls bulge out and make a tremendous wound as soon as they come in contact with the skin and flesh—without

¹ Cecil Chaplin, Mr. Chaplin's younger brother.

touching a bone. The stout gent: fancied that these little balls, though so deadly at the short ranges 100 and 150 yards, would be ineffective at the larger ones, but he will cease now to be sceptical. On Saturday I stalked a small lot of deer in Corrie Clacha, a capital chance at the first Royal 70 yards—he dropped dead. The second stood at 120. The ball took him slanting and broke six ribs. The third showed on the ridge at 250 yards. The ball went in at his lungs and clean out under his back bone. The beast being straight above me. The day before I got three stags—killing one going full pace at 190 yards with the 100 yards sight up and only aiming 3 feet before him, the ball going clean through his lungs. I think that there can be no doubt of the quickness and deadliness of these new balls with $3\frac{1}{2}$ dram: behind them, but I think that they may be further improved. I have suggested to Purdy to try reducing the ball to 40 in the pound and putting $4\frac{1}{2}$ drams of powder behind them. I expect then to shoot them up to 200 yards with one sight and so gain an additional 40 yards. . . .

Both my forests are gone to the bad, my “Glenarm” deer lying idle in Lord Stamford’s Forest which is under-stocked, and the frost and snow in June followed up by the greatest drought ever known has dried up the very springs—not left a blade of grass to keep a beast or a bit of bloom to feed a bee. We have lost all our old deer. I do not believe that we have on the ground a 15 stone stag. I got 12 of the best sort in the last 4 days— $14\frac{1}{2}$ the top weight. If you go on to the Reay from Kildermorie¹ I am most anxious to hear how it turns out and whether Sir F. Johnstone means to keep it on, especially how heavy the beasts are now, anything in the 20 stone class.

LOCH ERICHT LODGE,
DALWHINNIE,
September 19th, 1864.

There is no ground which I have seen which I have coveted so much as the Reay Forest extended to the North to include Ben Hope—when I shot in it, Ben Hee, to the

¹ Kildermorie deer forest in East Ross and Cromarty, about 25,000 acres, leased by Sir Edward Clarence Kerrison. See p. 267.

East, Stack to the West, were not included in it. I should imagine that the addition of Ben Hope would make it quite perfect. But you can get nothing in Scotland better than 80,000 acres of such grazing and close to the *sea*, which enables the old stags to winter. 80,000 acres, if correctly computed would be quite sufficient, if again the shooting of the adjoining sheep ground goes with the Forest—a most essential point, for it then does not matter putting your deer out of the ground. The sheep ground allows your Forester to turn them back. I do not believe that there was more than 80,000 acres in the Reay as I knew it, and a thousand or fifteen hundred head of deer. It was then greatly overstocked as I judged from the dirty state of the ground—but I was not in those primitive days up to counting the deer. If there are really 80,000 acres of fine grazing in it, I should have no doubt that it would be worth all the rent of £1800 as a *sheep walk* alone. You can easily get at its true extent in a very rough way. Make them quietly tell you its *average* length and breadth, multiply the length by the breadth to get the number of *square* miles. Then multiply 640 by the product. It must be 25 years since I was in the Forest, and my recollection is that 7 miles by 6 would have been about the mark, without Ben Hee and Stack, 42 square miles or 26,880 acres.

If you have 80,000 acres and 3000 deer upon it, I would take it without hesitation at £1800—£250 is ample to put down for preservation. There is no poaching in that county to guard against, and you will get capital salmon fishing and the best sea trout fishing in Scotland. . . .

Has Sir F. Johnstone the offer of the Reay? It is generally believed that Lord Dacre has engaged it. I have been smelling at Glen Quoich, but the expense of that is frightful, for Ellice is going to convert Glengarry into a forest, and it will be necessary to take Glengarry along with Glen Quoich, for Glengarry being wood and lying to the south and south-west of Glen Quoich, will rob Glen Quoich of all its best stags for the next seven years if not for ten. I am told that Lord Dudley is sickening of the Blair Forest

and enquiring about a forest in Prussia, which, if true, looks like a halfway house to Bedlam in the centre of Saxony. I am beginning to think that I cannot better myself, and shall have to remain here, with all its drawbacks. 120,000 acres but cannot winter its deer. We lose all our fine old stags, murdered by hundreds going down the country, and eat up by Hinds which we cannot destroy, after a very short time. *Quality* is what we care for, and you cannot have the two Qs, quantity and quality. I had a good week last week in 5 days and an evening—18 beasts, two 5s, and three out of four of the best Heads in the forest. But the lean beasts do not average here more than 13 stone. 16 is the best that I have got. With the exception of Blair Atholl and Black Mount, I do not believe that a forest exists which can stand up against more than one decent rifle. . . .

Let me hear what is the weight of the best beasts that fall at the Reay, quite clean, without any ballast, heart, liver, or lights, which are so often thrown in. When I was in the Reay the three year olds were so fat that they would have weighed 18 stone, and there were supposed to be a herd of 9 bullocks. I was not taken up to them. The Heads were then very miserable, and the same is said to be the case with the stags in Glen Quoich. There is no buying a sheep farmer out of his farm at present—they are making fortunes at the present price of wool. It will be different 2 years hence when cotton comes in from America.

LOCH ERICHT, KINGUSSIE,
September 24th, 1864.

Touching Mar, I forgot to tell you about Old Mar when the Duke of Leeds had it and never used it, nursing the beasts to look at, being incompetent to hit them—he never had more than 1200 or 1500 stags on the ground, and 3000 or 3500 deer, and it will not winter its own deer. I do not believe more than 4 or 500 stags winter in Mar. If, therefore, the Reay now carries 3000 deer and is *understocked*, it undoubtedly will winter all its own deer, which makes you master of them, independent of your neighbour, and it cannot fail to be a far better place than Mar at any rate for the next

5 or 6 years. This season the deer will have been put out of Corrie Mullie into Mar by George Duff to hoodwink his unfortunate victim whom they are fleecing—no good is to be done with Mar except upon a 10 years' lease—15 would be better and your *own keepers*. One of the men admitted to my head forester that they had not done me justice, but that they were only *servants* and were obliged to obey their *master's orders*, but that they did not like the dirty work. No forest save Atholl and Black Mount will admit of friends, without giving up your own sport, and the only way of avoiding being overcrowded with friends is to divide a forest with a partner—with a head and 2nd forester, each going out in turn with the head man taking the choice of the ground. Your grouse, your grey duds, your stable, you can share with your friends, not your beasts—they take 7 years to grow, and 18% of your stock is as much as you can take off annually.

There are some amusing reports of the doings at Blair Atholl; the returns of stags, *i.e.* beasts having horns—is 40; hinds and calves 15 and 20 *a day*, are booked to the accountant, who sends them up to the London market. *Potage à la tête de veau* must have become a perfect drug in the city. The Head Forester estimates the stock of hinds at Atholl at 10,000 !!! which ought to give 2500 stags, and admit of 250 stags being taken off it annually. This would allow of three rifles at work every day on it. That would be worth having. I have not five decent heads. There is, or was, for I have not seen it, a 6th that wants getting with 13 points; but their bodies are indecent—the heaviest beast 16 stone. The first roar has been heard, and I am afraid the sport will cease in another 10 days. This place has produced 50 beasts and Glenavon 11 only so far, but I hope to get a score more out of it.

LOCH ERICHT LODGE,
Thursday.

The purpose of the paling is to enable and entice the deer into jumping down into the parks and rich grass, to lie there all summer, and when the season commences to be obliged to cross the Dee into G. Duff's Forest, and be unable

to get back into Mar except by going round 6 or 7 miles of paling and getting through Black Cattle and by a *herd* at the end of it—the paling being so constructed that the deer can jump out of Mar but not back into it. This fence was only run up last Autumn for the express purpose of driving the deer into the Corrie Mullie Forest and preventing them getting back. Put up in haste with Trust money the whole countryside pressed into service at Harvest wages—the timber for the purpose taken out of the Forest and cut down with the *sap up* in direct violation of an express condition in the Duke of Leeds' lease—that no workman should be permitted to come into Mar Woods from July 1st to October 14th. Stipulate for gaps in the paling in three different places, *100 yards wide*, and a rigid adherence to the Leeds clause touching work in the woods. The paling, even in that way, will still be very objectionable. Deer hate being confined and when moved are compelled to disturb the woods from one end of them to another. The Parks will be a great loss. You will lose the 8 or 10 very heavy deer that they feed and butcher. You will miss them very much when the hills are dark. They are worth £150. You must have the West Park. You will have otherwise no place to run your ponies. The stables will not hold them, and keeping 15 or 20 ponies on corn will be as bad as keeping a scratch pack of hounds.

I have written to my man not to engage himself until he hears from me. I believe him to be a capital stalker—nothing against him except that he tried by unfair means to trip up the heels of his head man, who had been doing his best to get him a Head Man's place—a very dirty trick, but will not be an objection to you with a seven years' lease. A first-rate hand at stalking is the chief pleasure of the game—more necessary than a Goodall,¹ and the Mar stalkers are beneath mediocrity. I am sorry you did not stick out for 10 years or 12; they would have *given way*, for it will be after 5 seasons only that Mar will begin to pay. I think I shall try and have a deal with the old Bear's cub, though his hug is said to be very close, for one year and the option of going on.

¹ The famous huntsman. See *ante* p. 195.

Tell Sir E. Kerrison¹ that drafts are no good on the Hill except as makeshifts for a season, but I will set him up with puppies and unentered dogs. I hope to have a large entry next Spring—and to be able to give him something worth having—but the main difficulty is to cross the breed, out of my lot, all of one sort. I cannot hear of a single true bred Scotch deer hound. Lord Saltoun's cross has poisoned the whole race. If he requires a makeshift for next season, I have drafted a little dog called "Oscar", that can take a cold deer but will not go to the Head, and a young dog that at present shows the white feather and barks at the horns. This brace might be useful for next season. "Oscar" is got by a dog of Lord Saltoun's. The other is a true bred one. They belong to Morrison and are worth £15 for the brace.

My forefinger itches for the three monsters !!! But the Kildermorie Head Stalker has the reputation of humbugging his master by chucking in "Ballast"—i.e. tripe, tallow, lights, heart and liver. Without heart and liver the rest would not reduce the beast more than half a stone; and 21½ is enormous. I fell in with Lord Hamilton on the rail—he had killed a 19 stoner then, but did not *know* how he was weighed.

Mar should be burnt heavily on the *first* opportunity—say a one-fifth. Nothing will help to bring in the stags better out of Atholl, where they too have played the fool and not burnt. One-fifth this winter in strips, and another one-fifth next season; then one-eighth or one-ninth every year. Deer require burning, more even than grouse.

In October came a further letter concerning Mar. The advice contained in this letter to his young

¹ Sir Edward Clarence Kerrison, Bt., of Brome Hall, Suffolk, born 1821, M.P. for Eye, 1852–66, and for East Suffolk, 1866–67. In 1869 he formed a new country in Norfolk and on the Norfolk borders. He bought his hounds from the Quorn, from Lord Yarborough, and Mr. Henry Chaplin. He hunted for three seasons entirely at his own expense a country nearly 40 miles long. He was incapacitated by gout in his hands, and was unable to fire a gun or drive his team, but managed to ride with the use of two fingers. He was sometime President of the Royal Agricultural Society. He was Mr. Chaplin's second cousin, through his mother being an Ellice.

friend as to how to induce Lady Fife to part with Mar, is unhappily too adventurous for quotation.

INCHORY, TOMINTOUL,
October 9th, 1864.

If you make up your mind to invest in Mar, you will get it very simply by dancing and flirting with the young Lady McDuff. . . . You would then get Mar Lodge, a *sine qua non* for you. You would not tolerate the Sheiling—it cannot be made tolerable and destroys the very centre of the Forest. If you treat for it—stipulate for a 10 or 15 years' lease for the whole of the ground held by the Duke of Leeds—your own Forester with power to burn and exclusion of *workmen* from the Mar Woods during July, August, September and October. There are only two men on the ground that I would advise you to keep. You must also stipulate that all the *Foresters' Houses* are given up to you. These are essential points. You will get it for £1200 I have not a doubt, and the preservation may be done for £300 more. If you can bring yourself to nurse it for 3 or 4 years and shoot it *alone*, never having a second rifle out, you will like it. The account you give of the way the Sheep Farms at the Reay are managed, quite explains the paucity of big deer. After rutting they will wander off into the sheep ground and are certain to be massacred. I think, too, the length of the Forest must be over rated, if nothing but Ben Hee and Stack has been put under deer. Loch More is not more than 7 miles long—it cannot be more than 3 further to the sea, and allowing 3 or 4 for Ben Hee would not give more than 14 miles, or 84 square miles or 53,760 acres. It would also require more keepers to keep the deer in the Forest on the East and North—Loch More and the sea, admirable marches on the South and West—but no herding will keep your deer in the forest during the winter. Are the young deer, the three and fours, exceedingly fat? They were so when I was in it, but then they had the run of the sheep ground. These last few days will have clearly shown all the heavy beasts that the Forest holds. I have had a very good week here, considering that nothing could be more untoward than the weather for

stalking—south-east wind, the only impracticable wind for stalking, and three days so hot and still that the air never blew for half an hour the same way. I have got 14 beasts—12 from 15 to 16 stone, and one fine animal, but very much reduced, 17·4—ten days ago would have been 18½ stone, and one only 13 stone.

The first forest which Mr. Chaplin took on his own account was Glenfeshie in 1863. In those days the railway only went as far as Pitlochry, and his sister, Lady Radnor, relates how he used to spend the night there and cover the long distance next day in a fly. A little later, after Lady Radnor had married, he took the forest of Allt Dearach, near Loch Luichart, from Louisa, Lady Ashburton. Mr. Chaplin had taught Lady Radnor to shoot at Glenfeshie with a pea rifle, when she would make 6 bulls out of 8 shots at the target. When he was at Allt Dearach, she shot several stags at Invercauld with a miniature Martini-Henry, lent her by the late King Edward. The first time she used it in a deer drive she got four stags, two right and left twice, much to His Majesty's delight. Up to the time of his marriage, Mr. Chaplin was engaged in searching for a suitable place to which he could take Lady Florence. In 1876 he contemplated purchasing or leasing Coignafearn (in Inverness-shire, belonging to The Mackintosh). It covered 40,000 acres, all of which was forest with the exception of about 500 acres. At that time the only road was by Boat of Garten, as described in his letters to Lady Florence.¹ During his engagement he wrote: "I have ordered you a little rifle, and I am going to have a spy-glass, a proper one, made for you as well, and I am going to

¹ See p. 78.

teach you to shoot myself when I get to Dunrobin. I won't insist on your killing a beast—I think perhaps your heart is too tender for that—but you may kill a target as often as you please without hurting anyone." In 1879–1880 he leased with his brother-in-law, the Marquis of Stafford, the shooting of Ben Hope, near Tongue, and a large part of Melness in the parish of Durness. The whole family lived together in the old farm-house of Kinloch, which stands at the head of the Kyle of Tongue. There is no wilder or more beautiful place in Scotland. Only two miles off rise the five great battlemented heads of Ben Loyal,¹ and fourteen miles off to the north-east the white cliffs of the Orkney Islands show clear across the sea. In the evenings in fine weather a rose-red haze shrouds the glen and the lower slopes of the mountains which gradually turns to flame. It is indeed a "twilight of the gods", this mulberry gloaming—sunset and sea, mountain and harvest moon and purple-tinted peaks. For sheer beauty of colour effect it has no equal anywhere.

In 1880 Mr. Chaplin had the right of stalking over a considerable part of the county of Sutherland. Besides the Ben Hope and Melness ground he had Ben Armine, about twenty miles from Dunrobin, and—a further ten miles across the hills—Loch Choire and Corrie-na-Fhearn. This made over 70,000 acres, and in addition he entered into a nineteen-year lease

¹ Mr. Chaplin often told his children the story of how their mother went out one afternoon accompanied by her great mastiff dog to climb the hill, but on reaching the summit, as often happens, a thick mist came on, and there she would have had to spend the night had it not been for the dog. She tied her handkerchief to his collar and he led her down the hill, where, on nearing the house, she discovered her husband in great anxiety and people in all directions searching for her with lanterns.



of Cleithbric, extending from Loch Choire to the shores of Loch Naver. On this last ground he had the noble tops of Ben Cleithbric.

Some of the land was not yet cleared and all of it was difficult of access. Even at Ben Armine there was not a yard of bridle path, and no road of any kind within four miles of the lodge. At Loch Choire there was no accommodation except a shepherd's cottage. Mr. Chaplin amused himself with mapping out roads and developing the ground, and with a view to providing a house for his wife he decided to build a lodge at Loch Choire. He wrote to Lady Florence in the September before her death :

I am sorry you were not with us yesterday. You would have been fairly bewitched I think under the influence of the shining bright and sunny day with the loveliness of the place. Strathie¹ and I both thought that all the view to the south, south-east, south-west and west, is almost the prettiest thing in Scotland. . . . We have looked at three or four sites the two best I thought were, one, on the opposite side of the Loch from here just round the corner of the Loch, close to its edge and to a small clump of birches which shut out the ugly bit of north view ; and the other on the Corrie-na-Fhearn side, but a little further up the Loch than you and I went, with two lovely views to the South-East, South and South-West, one up Corrie-na-Fhearn, and the other looking over the end of Loch Choire, and a little bit of Loch a' Bhealaich, with a bit of the stream between the two coming in sight, and the birch woods and rocks on the left hanging over it. In this place, the whole ugly view up the Loch to the north is shut out by the shoulder of the hill which would be behind the house, but it would not be quite so good I think for the deer as the other spot. As far as the deer are concerned this place (Corrie-na-Fhearn) is everything I could wish and there are a few already about the

¹ The Marquis of Stafford.

ground in spite of the winter. There are so few sheep left that it has practically been a forest all this year. Of course there is the road and many etcetera to consider. I have my own idea of the wisest thing to do for next year, but all that we will consider well together. I am inclined to think that a road, and a wooden house for next season, which afterwards would do for gillies or servants, would enable you to see it all thoroughly as well as myself, and then we could pick a site deliberately, which we should not be so likely afterwards to regret, as if it was done in a hurry. I really think, child, and you know I am generally right, you will like it much better than Kinloch when you know it as well, and it is the most lovely loch to bathe in with a beautiful beach which will partly perhaps make up for the sea, and if the sea is a necessity, it is only a morning drive to Tongue, to get there. We had a good walk, and I got a beast coming home.

A week later, after the visit Lady Florence had paid to Sieber's Cross, he wrote the letter which has already been given on page 105.

His wife's death put an end to the scheme for the new lodge that he had designed for her. He had already begun to build the lodge referred to in his letter to her, which was completed in 1882 and which is still standing, although now much added to. It was constructed of corrugated iron and wood. The architect had built a larder in which no venison would keep fresh, so Mr. Chaplin promptly built a new one, designed by himself and his old stalker, which became a wonder of the countryside, for the meat in it would keep for weeks. The erection even of this hut was in itself a feat. The material had to be taken from Lairg station along the main road to Allt-na-Harra, some twenty-one miles, then to the farm of Cleithbric, and then carried across the

shoulder of the great mountain for twelve miles on the backs of ponies. Bridle paths were made from Ben Armine to Loch Choire, and round the shores of the loch to where they joined the road to the old posting inn, The Crask, on the northern road to Tongue, whence one could drive to Lairg and get the train for Dunrobin. To-day it is possible to motor the whole distance in two hours.

Stalking then was a very different matter from what it is to-day, when there are a multitude of bridle paths. The faces of the present generation of gillies would be long indeed if they were bidden take a stag fourteen miles across the hill without any sort of a track. Duncan MacRae, Mr. Chaplin's old stalker, who first went to Loch Choire in 1881, writes :

I often think of the old times when the deer had to be taken to the larder without a path on the place. Just think of taking stags to Ben Armine from Corrie-na-Fhearn, Corrie-na-seillch and round above Loch Choire and Halmadurie and the Floes east of Creag Mhor. The men and ponies nowadays would not do it, but in the old days it was all done in the best of spirits, and I never knew of a stag not being brought home. Of course, then the deer were almost all taken home the following day in daylight, but a few that were got near the Lodge were taken the same night. The way it was done was the pony had to be led out to where the stag was lying, and when it was balanced on the pony's back and strapped on the deer saddle, the pony was allowed to find his own way home, and with a little practice the pony would get quite good at following his own track home and when it came to a bad place it would snort and smell the ground and would go round and shun all the doubtful places.

Duncan was not only an admirable stalker, but a man of infinite tact. Once when he was out stalking

with Mr. Chaplin they saw two stags on the top of a high ridge on Meall a' Bhata. In order to get within shot they had to crawl up into full view, so there was desperate need of keeping low. Duncan whispered to Mr. Chaplin, "Keep doon, Squire, keep doon. Ye're so splendidly built about the haunches, that I'm afraid the deer will be seeing ye."

There being no house of any description then at Loch Choire, Mr. Chaplin used to lodge with the shepherd at Allt Alaird. Deer, of course, were not so numerous at Loch Choire in those days, but they soon began to crowd into the newly cleared ground, and the forest was a success from the beginning. To one who knows that wild country it is amazing to reflect upon the distances which Mr. Chaplin covered, considering that he usually arrived in the North in very poor form. His keenness never failed him. He was an excellent shot, but he would not be hurried. He liked a sitting shot, with his arm resting on his knee, and occasionally with a stalker's back to lean against. He was himself an excellent judge of a good beast, and had many a tale of his differences of opinion with an old stalker at Dunrobin, usually ending the story with—"And I said to the stalker, 'Be damned !'"

Not content with his already immense range of ground, Mr. Chaplin in 1882 took also Gobernusgach—in the Reay Forest—which included Ben Hee, with Mr. Grenfell, now Lord Desborough, who was then a very young man. He used to tell how once, being detained in the South longer than he expected, he was anxious to get on to the ground as soon as possible. Having stalked his way from Ben Armine to Loch

Choire accompanied by Duncan MacRae, he struck over the shoulder of Cleithbric to a place called Alltna-Harra, where he picked up the rest of his retinue. When he reached Gobernusgach he found Mr. Grenfell on the point of departure, and the larder empty except for an animal which he described as "a partially putrid rabbit". Whereupon he despatched his unfortunate French chef, who accompanied him, mounted on the Newmarket hack, to the nearest habitable place, twenty miles off, in pursuit of a sirloin of beef. Lord Desborough gives his own version of the tale in a letter to Lady Londonderry:

TAPLOW COURT,
TAPLOW, BUCKS,
Nov. 24th, 1924.

The incident of the "hare-rabbit" which provided your father with an unfailing source of chaff against me in later days occurred in this way. I took Gobernusgach with him in 1882. It was then part of the Reay Forest, where the deer were so skilfully and successfully looked after by the late Duke of Westminster and which I considered Paradise. The little house had been put up by Sir Charles Barry, in years gone by, for an intended visit by the Prince Consort from Dunrobin, which I believe never came off. However, one day, quite unexpectedly and unheralded your father swooped down on the place, mounted on his Newmarket pony, at the head of a large retinue, which included a valet, a famous cook, a stalker, a pony boy, and other retainers. The fact that made a lasting impression on him at the beginning of a very pleasant time was that there was absolutely nothing to eat in the place. It most unfortunately happened that on the day of his arrival I had descended upon the larder and distributed its contents. There was nothing left except an unusual specimen of our rodents, known afterwards as the "Hare-rabbit", which I had shot on the day before and which was destined for the stuffer.

Consternation for some time prevailed, but retainers, mounted and on foot, were sent in all directions, and the larder was slowly replenished. Fortified by the result of these successful labours, your father subsequently took to the hill, and as his knees were at the time rather weak for the support of his substantial frame, he terrified me by the precarious manner in which he used to balance his majestic form on pinnacles of rock, and by the more than intrepid way in which he used actually to roll down the precipitous declivity which was known as the Heathery Brae. However, no discomfort or even danger prevented him from pursuing with the undaunted courage which distinguished him in every sphere of life the sport to which he was so passionately devoted.

The hare-rabbit, however, as far as I was concerned, remained a stumbling-block and cause of offence and of much good-humoured banter ever after.

In 1891 Mr. Chaplin's memories of Gobernusgach were revived by a letter from Lady Desborough from that place :

I must send you a little line from the abode of the "blue hare" which you know so well, and tell you how we and the Hills are getting on. I do wish you had been able to come up here ; it has been quite delightful and we really have had the greatest fun and lovely weather almost all the time. We breakfast at 7, and live out the whole day long, and are all quite black with sun and wind and clothed in a few ragged garments ; enormous boots the only striking feature of costume. 23 stags to hand so far and lots of fish, all caught by this hand, as the men have been too busy on the Hill ; and I have been in at the death of 4 stags too, and panted many breathless miles over peat bogs.

What have you been doing all this long time since London ? Having a splendid time I am sure, because you always do. Some day when it is very wet and you have despatched the business of the nation, write a little line. I do hope we shall meet somehow before Willie and I sail away in the hollow ship to India, on November 29th. for four long

months. Think of me sometimes during all your nice times this Winter, and be kind to the poor yellow Anglo-Indian when she returns, all vestiges of youth and complexion having vanished. Her digestion will not be up to amphitryon banquets, but you might console her with weak tea in St. James' Square.

Evan Charteris and Charlie Grenfell are here now, and Mr. Martyn Kennard, and the Pembrokes are chronically due in the Bay in their yacht, which probably argues that they are at the Channel Islands. The Loch More people are most flourishing and civilised. I feel like Man Friday when we go there. Our time here is over alas ! next week and we go on to the Portlands at Langwell and then to Mr. Balfour's on the way down, and to some shoots in the South—Wortley, Wynyard, Stanway and Panshanger. Shall we by great good luck meet anywhere ? I suppose you will be at Newmarket next month ! Lady Randolph and the Brookes asked us for 1st and 2nd meetings, but alas ! we couldn't manage them—it would have been such fun.

Do be kind and write to this hermit if you ever have time and tell me about yourself and all the gossip ! You see I have no news of the outer world—have only lately realised that Lord Alington and Sarah Churchill are going to be married, either to each other or other people.

Here is some white heather I found yesterday—may it bring you all good things.

Remembering Lord Henry Bentinck's remarks about deerhounds, Mr. Chaplin obtained some of Lord Henry's breeding, and left behind him at Loch Choire and Ben Armine a few of the old stock. Good dogs were difficult to get even in Lord Henry's time. They are almost impossible now, and in most forests they are not used. One of the best of Mr. Chaplin's hounds was gored by a stag and had to be shot on the hill by the old stalker who loved it like a child. Mr. Chaplin had saved this same dog's life only the

year before its death. It had been badly hammered by a beast in Corrie-na-Fhearn and had swollen up from its shoulder to its flank. Mr. Chaplin tied his silk handkerchief very tightly round it and sent it home, and in a few days it had recovered.

Mr. Chaplin took especial pains in after life to develop the love of stalking in his children, drawing the barrel of a rifle on paper and showing them exactly how the bead on the fore-sight should appear in the block-sight. His son Eric, when a little boy of ten, used to go up with him to the lodge at Ben Armine, where he rode a Shetland pony. The twelve miles drive from Dunrobin to Sieber's Cross *en route* used to be passed by the two with a tartan rug over their knees playing "Beg o' my neighbour". Once at Loch Choire Eric went out before breakfast and happened to kill an adder. Returning, he found his father sitting in front of a dressing table which in the centre had a long glass right to the ground. He crept up and hung the adder round Mr. Chaplin's neck, who, feeling the cold touch of the thing, looked into the glass and saw the adder. He leaped to his feet with a roar of terror, and the wicked child fled from the room. When Mr. Chaplin returned to Dunrobin from the wilds he used to delight his children with stories of his stalks, and with fearful tales of dragons and witches and wolves, which he alleged were the common fauna of the interior of Sutherland. In 1920 he wrote to Lady Londonderry: "I always say you three children, brought up so much as you were, at Dunrobin, are much more Scots than you are English. Eric being at one time very much with old Alister, his grandfather's piper, talked Scots just like a High-

lander. I always think of him as a child with me, looking through the telescope at a stag. He had found it, and on my asking what the rest were like he said, 'Ach, he's just with himself!'"

Increasing weight and financial troubles compelled Mr. Chaplin to give up stalking, but he never lost his passion for it. In 1920 we find him writing to the Duke of Portland :

September 1920.

Most of my family have been, or are, in Sutherland, but this morning I lunched with my son, and his eldest boy, now 11, I think, on his way to a new school, and I learned that that child had killed either 4 or 5 stags this season in parts of the forest I made myself years ago, when we used to see your stags coming across from your forest to the hinds of Ben Armine, where there were always numbers even in those days. But it is delightful to see the younger generation as keen on this sport as we always were—and as I should be still if I could only walk.

He went again the following year to the Highlands, for he had an idea that he would be able to battle better with his insomnia if he could return to Sutherland. A letter written on the Twelfth in that year shows how his heart was with Loch Choire and the deer :

BELOVED CHILD—Your wire gave me the greatest pleasure. I read it in bed to which I have been confined for more than a month now with my leg up, with a clot of blood in one of the veins, and a wearisome time it has been. But that is over now, and I have got places and hope to start for Sutherland on Monday, by the Great Northern, which is timed to get to Inverness earlier than the other lines and so more likely to catch the earlier train on the Highland Line. From

Lairg, my ultimate aim is Scourie, but Bend Or¹ has kindly wired to me asking that I should break my journey on the 16th at Lochmore, where he will be then, and I have gladly consented. The left leg trouble which kept me so long in bed, that both Doctors agree is now harmless, but I have still trouble with the elastic stocking maker Borgeaud, who is making new ones, and although he has taken an order to finish a pair before I start on Monday, he has sent me one for the other leg that I cannot wear at present, and the last two weeks he has left London on Friday not to return till Tuesday.

Of course, I am rather a poor creature at present, a whole month in bed with a leg up, with all that terrific heat to begin with. One night the thermometer was at 90 and in defiance of all orders, I had to get up about 2 o'clock, walk into the sittingroom and get all the doors and windows open that I could to create some kind of draught. . . .

Before I had had Loch Choire 5 years, I killed a 5 year old stag that weighed, as they weighed at Dunrobin, 21·9 lb., and it wasn't nearly such grazing as the Reay Forest, and they killed there what the stalker picked out as the least good of 4 stags one day (old Westminster wouldn't have the best shot) and he weighed 24 stone. I sent my cook on a pony to measure the fat on his haunches (which I had seen myself) and it was 4½ inches deep. He sent one of them to Queen Victoria, where neither at Balmoral or Mar had they ever seen anything like it.

Bless you, my darling—how long shall you be in Scotland? I hope we shall meet somewhere.

He was far from well during the visit and only his determination to go north carried him through the journey. He started alone, except for his faithful William, for both his daughters were engaged with domestic duties and young babies. He went to Scourie on the far north-west coast, close to the

¹ The present Duke of Westminster, who succeeded his grandfather in 1899, the year that the horse of that name won the Derby.

island of Handa, and then at Loch More, where he had gone to visit the Westminsters, fell seriously ill. A month later he motored across to Lairg and so on to Uppat, and then for his last visit to Dunrobin, where the Prince of Wales was staying. There his memory must have travelled back across the years to the time when the then Prince of Wales (King Edward) was also at Dunrobin, at the happy time of his own engagement to Lady Florence. A fellow guest¹ remembers a certain incident on that visit. They were all starting out for shooting and Mr. Chaplin was waiting in the hall. "Aren't you coming with us, Harry?" said the Prince. "Sorry, sir," replied the Squire, "but I am waiting for Florence Paget!"

He paid one more visit to the Highlands in the year before his death, when he motored from Inverness to Uppat with Lady Londonderry and her son. He spent some peaceful weeks there, but he was already gravely ill, and days on the hill were for him a thing of the past. But he was one who lived much in happy recollections, and it comforted him in the decline of his bodily strength to re-create his youth in memory, and to recall his vanished friends, especially Lord Henry Bentinck, "the stout gentleman, hobbling on two sticks", from whom he had learned so many lessons in sport and life.

¹ Lt.-Gen. Sir Arthur Lyttelton-Annesley.

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VI

RACING

Nunc quales Diomedis equi, nunc quantus Achilles.

LORD CHAPLIN's career on the Turf cannot fail to engage the interest of all students of racing history. That he might qualify for the part to which he aspired, Nature had done much for him. She had bestowed on him a quick relish for the prowess and qualities of the horse: powers of reason and assertion: an intrepidity combined with frankness and tenacity: high spirits which rarely yielded to depression; an easy temper and a finished courtesy. He talked well, adding to an attractive address the authority of considerable knowledge. Thus equipped and with a gay vehemence he boldly set forth to pledge his fortune and to dedicate his youth to the most perilous and seductive of human pastimes.

As a *débutant* he made a sensation. The sporting world of 1865 heard with amazement that for two three-year-old colts Mr. Chaplin had given the unheard-of sum of 11,000 guineas. True they were of distinguished parentage, but they were untried. Mr. I'Anson, senior, had bred them both. One—Breadal-

bane—was by Stockwell out of Blink Bonny, and therefore brother in blood to Blair Athol, the famous blaze-faced chestnut who had won the Derby in the preceding year; the other—Broomielaw—was by Stockwell out of the renowned Queen Mary—the dam of Blink Bonny and grandam of Caller Ou, Blair Athol and Breadalbane. Mr. Chaplin, hearing of these two colts, went down to Malton to see if he could buy them. It is doubtful if then, or in later days, he remembered the adage :

The buyer hath need of a thousand eyes,
But the seller of only one.

I'Anson asked 6000 guineas for each colt, and Mr. Chaplin at once agreed to give the price for Breadalbane. But the astute vendor remarked that as neither animal had been tried, it was quite possible that the better one would be left behind. To this suggestion Mr. Chaplin yielded, and bought both colts for 11,000 guineas. Nothing like this had ever been paid before for horses which, though they had been freely entered by their breeder for important two-year-old engagements, had yet to make their appearance on the race-course. The greatest anxiety was evinced to see them. A special commissioner was despatched to Malton to report on them, and the younger I'Anson, who had been engaged by Mr. Chaplin to train them, was so pestered with applications that he was obliged to advertise that neither animal could be seen without a special order of admission.

Doubtless, the extraordinary popularity of Blair Athol—"the finest horse in the world", as the late Mr. Tattersall once called him—contributed greatly to

their fame. The most extravagant stories were in circulation at Malton. It was regarded as heresy to doubt that Breadalbane as a two-year-old had beaten his distinguished brother at even weights in the autumn of the previous year. The admirers of Broomielaw put his claims nearly as high. The delightful Blink Bonny—the dam of Breadalbane, who had won the Derby in 1857—had died at his birth, and the foal's foster-mother was a cart mare. He was a typical Stockwell—a big chestnut—but, in appearance, a little wanting in quality. Broomielaw in time became a savage.

On May 11th Mr. Chaplin won his first race under the Rules of Racing. This was in the Dee Stakes at Chester, when Broomielaw, in the newly registered colours of "All Rose", and ridden by Custance, stayed the $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles so well that he easily beat the five horses of his own age who opposed him, and credited his owner with stakes of the value of £415. The horse's evil disposition was shown on this occasion. According to the testimony of J. Osborne, Broomielaw, in the course of this race, savaged another horse and shook him, and subsequently kicked down the railings when he returned to the paddock.

It was then Breadalbane's turn. His maiden appearance was at Newmarket in the race for the Two Thousand. In the field was Kangaroo, an even more expensive purchase than Breadalbane. Lord Hastings had seen Kangaroo win the Biennial at the Craven meeting, and, being determined to have something to run against Mr. Chaplin's horse—The Duke was laid aside with influenza—bought the impostor from Mr. Padwick, who graciously consented to part with him

for the then phenomenal sum of £12,000. Thus opened the duel between the two rivals.

Before the date of the Two Thousand—May 2nd—Breadalbane and Broomielaw were tried; but the greatest mystery hung over the trial. So careful were the arrangements for secrecy that the young Squire had to approach the Northern stable alternately by rail and road, in order to elude the children of the night. Rumour had it that Broomielaw had won the gallop by three lengths; but then at what weights? For Breadalbane was still the better favourite for the Derby. One thing was certain, and that was that far more cogent evidence was required to alienate the love of Yorkshire from the brother of the adored Blair Athol.

On the day of the race there was a perfect mania for the horse, due, no doubt, to the *réclame* of his breeding and the extravagance of his purchase. He started an even better favourite than Gladiateur. He was mobbed in the paddock. At the same time, the *cognoscenti* of Newmarket, while admitting that he was a commanding horse, did not share the infatuation of Malton. Their doubts were justified, for in the race Breadalbane was beaten out of a place. The winner was Gladiateur—perhaps, the horse of the century—who, suffering from chronic navicular, was nearly always lame, and whose trainer had only had some two months to get him into shape for his classic engagement. From the Dip Gladiateur came right away from his field with the race apparently well won, the roaring Liddington, the presumed danger, having dropped away beaten. Gladiateur's jockey, easing his mount, never saw Archimedes until Lord

Stamford's horse came up to him. He just managed to get going again, and scrambled home in the last few strides by a neck.

Undaunted by Breadalbane's failure, Mr. Chaplin ran both him and Broomielaw in the Derby. The craze for the former still raged. The prophetic poetaster of the day wrote :

The ribbon blue of '65, Squire Chaplin bears away,
And Aldcroft and Breadalbane are the heroes of the day.

In the paddock, Mr. Chaplin's horse, led by I'Anson, was escorted by a crowd of young admirers, wearing rose-coloured ties ; while the odds of 7 to 2 showed that he was only separated by half a point from the winner of the Two Thousand. The Prince of Wales and his friends cordially offered Mr. Chaplin their good wishes in the impending contest. The colt, however, did not please the *érudits* of the Epsom crowd. They maintained that he lacked the length and liberty of his famous brother. By them the horse was thought to be dull and dry in his coat, and the opinion was freely expressed that he had been hurried in his preparation. On the other hand, Broomielaw—the day was very hot—sweated profusely and the horse fidgeted under the attentions of the crowd. At the post he was awkward, and, though he showed prominently at the turn, he died away as they entered the straight. In the preliminary canter Breadalbane went with such high action that there were many doubts as to his ability to last over the course, and they were amply justified. From the start it was an inglorious exhibition on the part of the big horse. Hard driven before the top of the hill

was reached, his jockey could hardly keep him on his legs as the descent was made. Meantime, *Gladiateur* at Tattenham Corner swept round wide of the whole field, winning in a canter from *Christmas Carol* and *Eltham*.

Well might the mighty Frenchman win the race. His home trial was wonderful. He had been set to give *Fille de l'Air*, the Oaks winner of the previous year, and of several races before the Epsom meeting, no less than 8 lb. over $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the Limekilns. He had run away from her and two other four-year-olds to whom he gave 35 lb.

Although Mr. Chaplin exonerated his jockey, who in some quarters was most unfairly blamed, he did not hesitate to impute blame to his trainer, and *I'Anson* resigned.¹ The Squire removed his horses from Malton, and transferred them to the care of William Goater at Findon, where they remained for a short time before being sent to Newmarket.

To the North country the result of the Derby was a bitter disappointment. The men of Yorkshire had been proudly confident of the success of their local favourite, and had backed their opinion substantially. The defeat of *Breadalbane* left Malton bare of money; but Newmarket drew very large supplies from the Ring.

At Ascot Mr. Chaplin received some compensation for *Breadalbane*'s two defeats. In the Prince of Wales's Stakes of a mile and five furlongs the horse was made a warm favourite at 6 to 4. Opposed by eight very

¹ It is true that this is not borne out in a recent publication entitled *Malton Memories and I'Anson* (see p. 182), but contemporary evidence appears clearly to support the statement in the text. See also *John Porter of Kingsclere*, p. 72.

moderate opponents he won an easy victory, to the great delight of the Prince of Wales and the ladies in the Royal Enclosure, who wore the popular owner's colours. Mr. Chaplin had a good race, while the stakes were of substantial value. For the moment the horse recovered some of his popularity : he was patted by the crowd and told that he would win the St. Leger. But the more prudent knew that the race was no test for the final classic ; they realised that Breadalbane was not the express image of Blair Athol ; and that only in the event of Gladiateur breaking down could he be reckoned to have a chance in the Doncaster contest.

Breadalbane next appeared at Goodwood in the Gratwicke Stakes, where with 7 to 2 on him he cantered away from a field of very moderate horses. He then waited for the St. Leger.

The Doncaster festival arrived, but the fickle prophets, and the sibyls of Fleet Street and Yorkshire had deserted their favourite of the spring. He was said to have tired at Goodwood : his charm was gone ; the idol of the North had no worshippers on the Town Moor, and he started in the race at the derisory odds of 25 to 1. The Frenchman commanded the market, and odds of 13 to 8 were gladly laid on his chance. In the contest the rose jacket was seen on the rails at the distance, when Gladiateur ran clean away from the others, and, never being challenged, was practically pulled up by Grimshaw on the post, the jockey prudently making the best of his way to the enclosure long before the rest of the field. Regalia —the winner of the Oaks—was second, and Archimedes, who, accidentally, had given Gladiateur a good

race in the Two Thousand, third. Breadalbane was officially placed fourth.

Gladiateur and Breadalbane met again on the Friday in the Doncaster Stakes. During the morning it was generally understood that Gladiateur would walk over, Mr. Chaplin receiving a certain sum out of the Stakes. But later in the day another horse became a competitor, and Jennings, the trainer, would have been very glad to retire Gladiateur from the engagement. The horse, however, would have been wholly unmanageable had he been balked of a gallop at the last moment, and so the race had to take place. This time Breadalbane received 10 lb. from his great opponent, although Admiral Rous declared that nothing under 18 lb. would bring them together. Mr. Chaplin's horse did not run nearly as well as he had done on the Wednesday. He tried to make use of his advantage in the weights, but it was of no avail, and Gladiateur played with him.

On September 27th Mr. Chaplin was elected a member of the Jockey Club, a position he lived to enjoy for fifty-eight years.

A month later at Newmarket Breadalbane was once more in winning form. He secured the Triennial Produce Stakes, and the Free Handicap; and in a match received forfeit from Peerless.

In his last race of the season he again met Gladiateur—this time in the Cambridgeshire, when the Derby winner of the year was handicapped with 9 st. 12 lb. and Breadalbane with 8 st. 3 lb.—an indication of the official appraisement of their respective merits. Gladiateur was favourite at 13 to 2; but Breadalbane was not quoted in the market. The

race was won by Gardevisure, to whom Gladiateur was giving 3 st. 10 lb. ; and yet, but for the tragic mishandling of the short-sighted Grimshaw, the race would probably have gone to the best horse that ever trod the turf, with the possible exception of St. Simon.

Once again, and for the last time, Breadalbane was to meet his great opponent. At Ascot in the following year he and Regalia challenged Gladiateur in the race for the Gold Cup. The ground was very hard, and Gladiateur was more infirm than usual. Although Grimshaw's orders were to lie up with the other two, he allowed Breadalbane to pass the stand the first time round with a lead of twenty lengths, while Regalia headed Gladiateur by another ten lengths. Farther and farther the leaders slipped away from the French horse, so much so that in the Swinley bottom the gap was estimated at 300 yards. Suddenly, the amazed spectators saw that Gladiateur had been given his head, and lo ! the interval was gone.¹ On he strode, until he passed the post forty lengths to the good, Regalia following and rolling in distress ; while Breadalbane had scarcely reached the turn into the New Course, and did not finish.

The subsequent history of Breadalbane is not of special interest ; and in 1867 Mr. Chaplin disposed of him to Colonel Irving for 1500 guineas.

The career of Broomielaw was respectable. Reference has already been made to his first success at Chester and to his performance in the Derby. His

¹ Jennings was told by Grimshaw that when he let Gladiateur go, the horse ran away with him. See a most interesting article on Epinard and Gladiateur in *Country Life*, March 8, 1924, by the Master of Charterhouse.

next engagement after Epsom was at Ascot, where the reporter of the race observed that he looked much lighter than he did on the day of the Derby. He ran with success in the 12th Ascot Triennial, winning from Gardevisure and others by a length and a half. At York he greatly disappointed the young Squire and his connections. He had walked over for a Produce race of £75—distance two miles—and two days later was brought out for the Great Yorkshire Stakes—a race that, since the day when The Miner defeated Blair Athol, has maintained its character for surprising results. For this race Broomielaw was greatly fancied, and he started at 5 to 4 on. One who was present on the occasion writes that no sooner were the numbers hoisted than there was a rush to the corner of the enclosure, and it was thought that some accident must have happened, or that Admiral Rous was ill. However, it proved to be the greeting of the Ring to Squire Chaplin as he descended from the Round House, amid a dense crowd, to back Broomielaw. The Squire was obliged with 1000 to 800 as often as he wanted it. But the good thing went astray, and Klarinska beat the rose jacket in a canter by a length.

At Doncaster in the FitzWilliam Stakes Broomielaw had a 7 lb. penalty, and was not placed in the race. The following year he ran in the Chesterfield Cup at Goodwood when Custance had a very unpleasant experience of him, for he had become almost a mad horse. It was arranged that he should be mounted at the post. As Custance approached him Broomielaw came at him open-mouthed, and, with difficulty, the jockey was thrown into the saddle. The horse then bolted into a cornfield, got on his knees,

and worried the ground. The starter sent his man to the rescue, who, by Custance's directions, hit him hard with his whip below the hocks, and away went Broomielaw with the other horses, who were cleverly despatched by the starter at the same moment. Broomielaw won the race in a canter.¹ It was his last appearance on the race-course. In vain were efforts made to get him into a box for Brighton in the course of the next week; but he kicked everything near him to pieces, and so injured himself that he never ran again. At a sale of Mr. Chaplin's horses at Albert Gate in 1869 Sir John Astley paid 1500 guineas for Broomielaw.

But Mr. Chaplin's operations as an owner of race-horses in 1865 were not confined to events under the Rules of Racing. In the spring he had a notable success between the flags with a horse named Emperor.² This animal, by Orpheus, a son of Orlando from a half-bred mare, was bred by Sir George Strickland, and was subsequently purchased by Mr. Hall, the Master of the Holderness. Mr. Hall had matched him successfully to beat a horse of Lord Middleton's over two miles, when Emperor won by ten lengths. He had also been second in a field of ten for the Union Hunt Plate, run over $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. With such antecedents and combining the qualities of a hunter with a good turn of speed, Emperor,² at a sale of Mr. Hall's horses, attracted the young Squire—already well known as the Master and a handsome supporter of

¹ *Riding Recollections*, by Custance.

² Mr. Chaplin owned three Emperors—Emperor I. a magnificent dark chestnut hunter, the horse in the picture; Emperor II., always styled "the Emperor" in steeplechase circles, the hero at Wetherby; and Emperor III., mentioned later, the winner at Bedford.



EMPEROR I
*Mentioned in *Custance's Recollection**

the Burton Hunt—who bought him for 400 guineas. Mr. Chaplin entered his new purchase for the Grand National Hunt Steeplechase for hunters that had not been in a training stable since January 1, 1865. The race—a four-mile course—was run at Wetherby on March 29. Mr. Chaplin for this occasion was the guest of Mr. George Lane-Fox, the Master of the Bramham Moor Hounds, who had been a friend of his uncle, Mr. Charles Chaplin, and whose pithy and pointed judgments on men and things were often quoted by Mr. Chaplin in later years. Mr. Lane-Fox always claimed that he introduced the Squire into public life by persuading him to make his first speech at a luncheon at Bramham Park, when the Hunt Puppy Walkers were entertained. To meet his young friend, whose spirited purchase of Breadalbane and Broomielaw had spread his name and fame throughout the West Riding, Mr. Lane-Fox assembled a large gathering of the Bramham Hunt, and a cheery party welcomed the owner of Emperor. Wetherby is about four miles from Bramham and provides a good hunting country. Little seems to have been thought of Emperor's chance, for he was quoted at long odds in the betting. The field numbered twenty-nine, and Emperor, carrying 12 st. 10 lb. and well ridden by Alec Goodman, won easily by three lengths. The horse, however, became the subject of an objection on the ground that he had been under the management of a public trainer. But the stewards, of whom the present Lord Coventry was one, decided a rather nice point in Mr. Chaplin's favour. Emperor, with a draft of the Squire's horses—including one significantly named Protectionist—came up for sale at the opening

of New Tattersall's, and was the first horse ever sketched in that establishment. He was reserved at 650 guineas.

This narrative must now pass to the early summer of 1865. On June 17—the Saturday after Ascot—Mr. Chaplin drove his coach down to Eltham. It was the occasion of Mr. Blenkiron's annual sale. There, in the sunshine near the graves of Kingston and Defenceless, and in the trim garden with its white walls and the then drooping laburnums, were assembled the *Magnates* of the turf. On the Squire's coach, which was drawn up in a good position on the auctioneer's left, were seated, with others, Lord Maidstone, Lord de Grey—and Admiral Rous, ready to whisper words of caution to the young coachman. Lord Maidstone lamented, meanwhile, that his friends of polite education continued to pronounce the *y* in Marsyas long, as that stud horse was led about for inspection : a solecism comparable to that committed against the *y* in Cyllene, of which, in these later days, another precisian—a senior member of the Jockey Club—frequently, but uselessly, complains.

At length No. 27 in the catalogue was reached, and a colt by Newminster out of Seclusion danced into the enclosure. Fortunately for the Squire of Blankney, those sprites which

Hang o'er the box and hover round the Ring

came to his aid, and prompted a purchase which, under the name of Hermit, was destined to make sensation on the turf and history at the stud. The next yearling in the catalogue was one by Dundee out

of Shot. This youngster went to the bid of Mr. Merry. The great ironmaster was naturally attracted by the son of his very gallant horse who, though broken down, had run in the Derby of 1861, perhaps the gamest finish ever seen on Epsom Downs.¹ For these two colts 1000 guineas each was paid. Such was the introduction into public view of Hermit and Marksman, who, according to Fortune's ordering, were to be first and second in a most thrilling race for the Blue Riband in the year 1867.

Hermit, with six others purchased by Mr. Chaplin at the sale, was despatched to Bedford Cottage at Newmarket,² there to be trained by Bloss under the shrewd and capable direction of Captain Machell, with Custance as first jockey to the stable at a retaining fee of 500 guineas.

The ability of Hermit was ascertained before the end of the year. While still a yearling he was tried one December morning on the Bury Hill to give 35 lb. to a filly named Problem—also a purchase at the Eltham sale—over four furlongs. Hermit won the trial by two lengths. The filly in the early spring won the Brocklesby from a large field. As she shortly afterwards beat Hippia, the destined winner of the Oaks, it was evident that Hermit was a colt of considerable promise, and his name soon appeared in the betting lists of the Derby. Problem's victory in the Lincoln race was very popular, the Blankney tenants loudly cheering the filly as she returned to scale. The

¹ It is an interesting coincidence that Kettledrum and Dundee were respectively 1 and 2 in the sale catalogue at Doncaster in 1859, and in the same order finished in the Derby of 1861.

² Tradition says that Hermit was once at Findon; but, if so, it must have been for a very short time. See *Porter of Kingsclere*, p. 72.

result appears to have been largely due to the masterly riding of Custance.

Hermit and Marksman were not long in making acquaintance on the race-course. On the Wednesday of the First Spring meeting a Sweepstakes of £200 each over the last four furlongs of the Rowley Mile was set immediately before the Two Thousand. There were seven subscribers and four runners went to the post—Lord Stamford's Cellina (8 st. 10 lb.), the Duke of Beaufort's Lady Hester (8 st. 5 lb.), Marksman (8 st. 7 lb.), and Hermit (8 st. 7 lb.). They were a quartette of useful youngsters, but public interest was fixed on Hermit and Marksman. Hermit was seen to have grown into a horse of unmistakable class—a rich red chestnut with a little white about him, standing about 15·3. His muscle was well placed and his shoulders excellently laid. His quarters of great power bore witness to the paternity of Newminster, in union with a mare who inherited the blood of Sultan through sire and dam; and when extended, his action was light and easy. But, above all, he exhibited that appearance which connotes quality in the horse—that neatness and grace of make and shape which, perhaps, the Roman poet meant by the epithet *argutus*: a word which Fox and Windham delighted to discuss on their visits to Newmarket. Marksman was a very different horse—a yellow chestnut—bigger and more powerful at all points than his rival, but wanting in that attribute of quality which the other possessed. The starter, doubtless thinking of the impending Two Thousand and of Lord Lyon, who was to win it, had them away in a moment. Cellina won the scramble by three parts of a length from Hermit,



J. J. Gleason

WATCHING THE GALLOPS AT NEWMARKET.

who beat Lady Hester by a head. It was just the lesson the two promising novices wanted. They were beaten, it is true, but the young lady knew something of the game of which they were ignorant.

At Bath in the Fifteenth Biennial Stakes, on 6 lb. worse terms, Hermit again met Lord Stamford's filly, and on this occasion beat her by a neck. In the Woodcote Stakes, however, in the hands of Custance for the first time, he suffered a three-lengths defeat by Achievement. Colonel Pearson's filly was, undoubtedly, one of the best of her sex that ever ran. She was always Hermit's superior. Subsequently, Hermit won by a neck a Biennial at Ascot—the Stockbridge Biennial on June 13 at the Bibury Club meeting—and the Troy Stakes on June 15 at Stockbridge. In the two last engagements he started an odds on chance. Among the horses he met and defeated were Julius, Marksman, and Vauban. In Captain Machell's judgment these races were enough for a light and rather delicate horse, and therefore he retired him from further efforts that season on the race-course.

Fortune smiled this year on Bedford Cottage. No less than eighteen of their horses were winners; many of them owing success to the skill with which they were placed in their various engagements. But all the time the Squire's heart was with the two-year-old of high promise.

Although Hermit was no longer busy his friends and enemies were, and in a buoyant market on the Derby no horse figured more prominently in bets. Lord Derby, who was then leading the Conservative Opposition, and who became Prime Minister in the

following year, wrote to Lord Hartington : “ I shall be quite ready to make the same bet for next year’s Derby, laying against all the horses that shall have appeared in public before the first day of Goodwood races, though the offer on my part is rather a rash one, as already there is a rattling favourite in Hermit.”

A persistent opponent of Hermit’s claims for the Derby was Lord Hastings. His figure, as is well known, crosses Mr. Chaplin’s path in striking and dramatic fashion. It may therefore be convenient to pause at this point of Hermit’s career in order to sketch lightly those features of the story of Lord Hastings, and the main indications of its character, which may serve such judgment as may be passed upon it.

Henry Weysford Charles Plantagenet was born in 1842, and on the death of his brother, the third Marquis, in 1851, succeeded to the splendour of many titles and to the broad acres of fine estates in England and Scotland. From Eton he went to Oxford, where his stay was brief, and, in the matter of the society he affected, disastrous. He was utterly spoilt from the outset by the flattery and homage of sycophants. Even in the cricket field of Donington the venal incense was offered, and tenants and retainers were bribed to allow his Lordship to make runs in his own clumsy way. He carried the horn as the nominal Master of the Quorn Hounds, but the field had to wait for his late and languid appearances at the meets. Of the sport he knew as little as of the country over which he rode, and the wits of the hunt wrote cheap derisory verse at the expense of the Master who, with strange and sardonic humour, reprinted and circu-

lated the accusing criticisms of his own performances. His destiny was the turf, and it became the business of his poor stained life.

The first Lord Holland, with experience to come of the ways of his own profligate son, once wrote to his wife, "We shall have money enough for everything but gaming, and nothing were sufficient for that"—an aphorism correctly stated and amply proved as the racing life of Hastings rapidly developed.

At once a bankrupt and a prosp'rous heir,
Hilario bets—Park, House, dissolve in air.

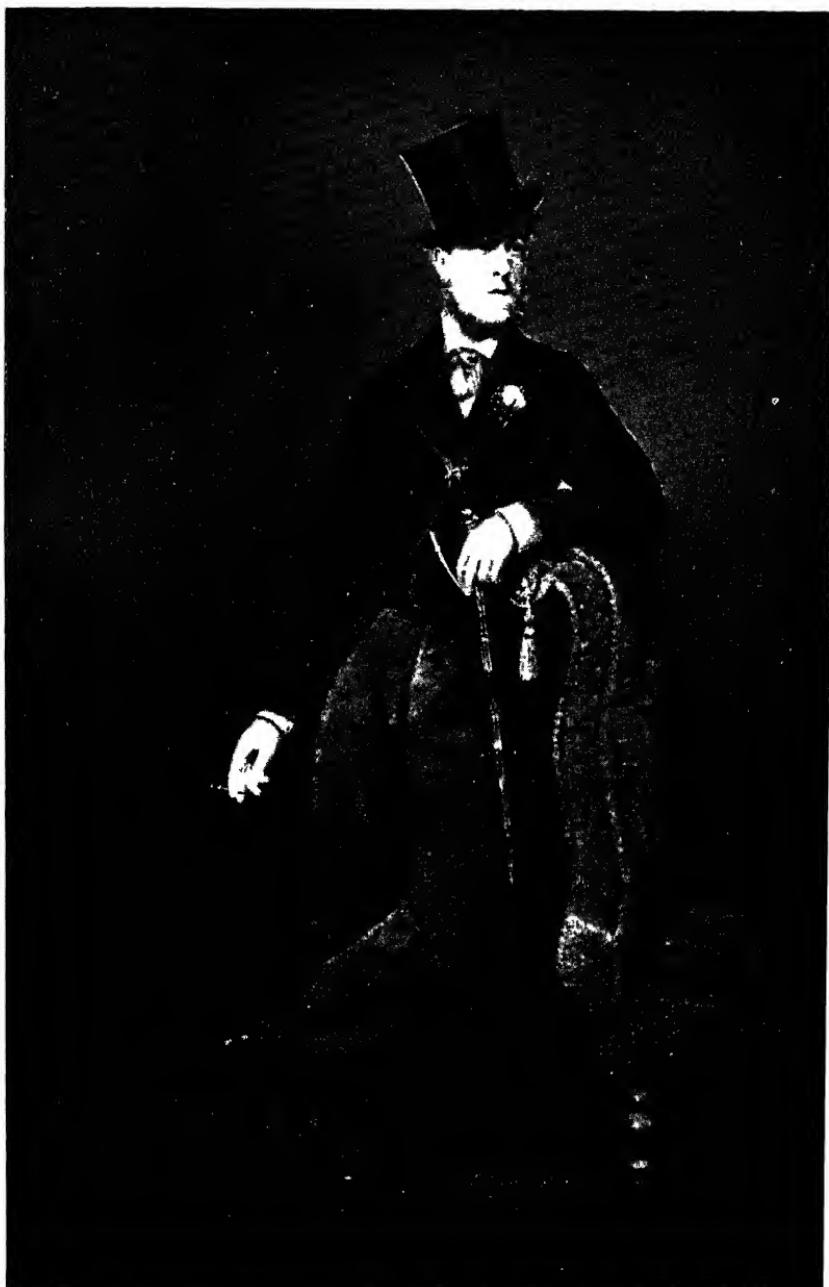
The young nobleman's downward path was made very easy for him. It was smooth at the first, and strewn with the flowers of premature success. He discovered every facility for complete and rapid ruin in a company which received him with open arms. He betted in sums often exceeding the rent roll of a country squire or the salary of a Cabinet Minister ; and success or failure generally depended upon the health of a two-year-old or the fall of a card. Indeed, his life was the life of Rome in the days of the great satirist :

quando
Maior avaritiae patuit sinus ? alea quando
Hos animos ?

In his general conduct on the turf good was largely chequered by evil. In the assembly of equals, where rules of action cannot be precisely determined, but where men must guide themselves by some consideration for the feelings of others, his behaviour admitted neither of excuse nor palliation. Hastings will always be remembered as a gambler and a despoiler. In the

character of the latter he perpetrated an outrage and inflicted an insult upon a man who shared the same situation in the then limited area of fashionable society. From motives which here need not be explored or exposed, a lady, who had pledged her word to Mr. Chaplin, lent herself to the overtures of Hastings, and, for the moment throwing honour and good faith to the winds, hurried from the unsuspecting company of the former to the precipitate celebration of a marriage with the latter.

Lord Hastings' colours were registered in 1863, and at the Second October meeting he was elected a member of the Jockey Club. In the following year he won the Cambridgeshire, with Ackworth—a three-year-old carrying 7 stone—for which he had paid 2000 guineas. The same year he owned a really good two-year-old named The Duke—a high-couraged, irritable colt by Stockwell from Bay Celia. In the month of his marriage to Lady Florence Paget, Hastings had the mortification of seeing the Duke beaten twice by Liddington at the July meeting. In the following year Mr. Chaplin, as has been mentioned, had two horses in the Derby, but his rival could not join issue with him with The Duke, as that horse was the victim of influenza in April, and could not run. He ran, however, after winning the Goodwood Cup, in the St. Leger, for which he started second favourite; but, overpowering Fordham, he was never in hand until the Red House was reached, and he finished unplaced. From that time onward he won race after race—indifferent to whatever was the distance. Sometimes he would canter in front of his field in a two-mile race, and on another occasion he



THE MARQUESS OF HASTINGS.

would cut down Mr. Chaplin's Breadalbane over a shorter course. In the following year Hastings again had no Derby candidate, for Blue Riband could not be trained ; but he had ample compensation in the wonderful little Lecturer whom he jointly acquired after the colt had won a race at Stockbridge. Although he had never run in public over a mile, Lecturer was allotted in the Cesarewitch 7 st. 3 lb.—a weight which in those days was regarded as crushing for a three-year-old. This impost was attributed to Admiral Rous's emphatic disapproval of the heavy gambling of the horse's owner, and also to a whisper reaching him of a Danebury *coup* in preparation. The plunging owner, nevertheless, defeated the old Dictator, and Lecturer won. He started at 9 to 1—for there was a strongly fancied filly in the race with 5 st. 7 lb.—and Hastings won a fortune over his horse's success.

All that year and throughout the winter and spring of 1867 Hastings never ceased to oppose the chances of Mr. Chaplin's Derby candidate. "Harry", wrote his unhappy and embarrassed wife, "is betting against Hermit as if he were dead." He wagered thousands on thousands against the horse ; and at the fall of the flag at Epsom he counted his money as already won. In truth, Hastings' prejudice against Hermit can only be described as malignant ; and it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that his opposition was prompted by personal sentiments of antipathy to the owner.

The racing year drew on, and the Two Thousand arrived. Hermit had not been entered for the race, which was won by Vauban, with Marksman, evidently short of condition, in the third place. Under some

disadvantages Knight of the Garter in Hermit's stable was second ; and, as it was thought that Hermit was at least 10 lb. better than his stable companion, there was nothing to discourage the followers of the favourite. For the moment all looked well.

In his preparation for the Derby, Mr. Chaplin's horse had as schoolmasters Target and Rama. The latter, a purchase from Lord Westmorland, proving too exacting a mentor, and having nearly run Hermit off his legs on the trial ground, was withdrawn from the regular service of tuition. Rama, it may be remembered, had shown himself to be about as good as Lord Lyon in the previous autumn, so doubtless he had bullied the three-year-old rather severely in his work.¹

The time had now come—it was ten days before the Epsom meeting—when Hermit had to undergo the ordeal of the regulation Derby trial ; and Custance was engaged to go down to Newmarket to ride. The jockey travelled there on the Sunday evening, and at Bedford Cottage discussed with Captain Machell the all-important question of the weights which the Derby candidate and Rama should carry respectively in the trial. It was decided to have a Yorkshire gallop on the Monday, and the formal trial on the Wednesday. In the “rough up” Custance was allowed to arrange

¹ A detailed description of Hermit as a three-year-old is interesting. His height was 15·2*½*. He had a long lean head, not quite elegantly set on to his straight clean neck, with nicely laid shoulders. He was muscular and bloodlike, with a good middle, if a trifle too long. He had fine loins, great haunches, and big but rather short thighs. His arms were powerful ; his joints first rate, and his legs short and clean. His notable feature was that the point of the quarter came down in a line with the point of the hock. He was a horse of beautiful temper, and in his slow paces moved with rather a listless air.

the weights, and he put them at 16 lb. for the year, as he did not wish Hermit to have too much to do before the more searching test on the Wednesday. The course chosen was that by the side of the Ditch to the Cambridge Road with the finish by the Old Duke's Stand—in all about a mile and a half. For a mile in the gallop Hermit went well, pulling Custance out of the saddle ; so much so that the jockey began to think that he had asked the older horse too severe a question. He called on the boy to hit Rama ; but it made no difference, and Custance then realised the trim and excellence of the Derby horse. The satisfaction was momentary. Hermit coughed : blood poured from his nostrils, and he all but collapsed in his stride. Slowly and dejectedly man and horse made their way to the Birdcage, and, after first aid had been rendered, the disconsolate couple returned by the back way to Bedford Cottage.¹

But the young Squire—where was he at the time of this tragic happening ? How was it that on such an important occasion he was not on his hack, watching every phase of the gallop on the Heath ? He had had a fall, straining the cartilages of both knees, and was a prisoner in his rooms in London. Thither Custance went with all speed to break the sad news to his young master, and to receive instructions as to future arrangements. He took with him a letter from Captain Machell. On reading this letter Mr. Chaplin's first impulse was to scratch his horse at once ; but, fortunately, Custance dissuaded him. Later, he consulted Lord Calthorpe, who declared that "it would be unfair to Jem Machell to take the horse out of the

¹ See *Riding Recollections*, by Custance.

race". Still Hermit's chance was apparently extinguished, and proposals were made to Custance to ride *The Rake*, who was then favourite for the race. Mr. Chaplin's retainer was, of course, the difficulty; but, at the instance of Mr. Pryor, who greatly fancied his horse's chance at Epsom, Mr. Chaplin surrendered his claim to Custance's services, and wrote a letter to that effect.

Meantime it was gradually discovered at Newmarket that Hermit's case was not so serious as at first it was thought to be, and he resumed slow work. Every care was taken to avoid any repetition of the trouble, and on the Saturday before Epsom week Captain Machell gave him some canters of a mile each, the reverse way of the Rowley Mile, and in these the horse did well. And so to Epsom he went, his trial horses with him. After arriving there, Bloss telegraphed to Mr. Chaplin to ask him if he would meet him at Epsom, and Mr. Chaplin, though on crutches, went down the next day to see his anxious, but still hopeful, trainer. Bloss gave his master the cheering news that Hermit had done a capital gallop the day before. "He never went better in his life, sir, and he squandered his trial tackle as usual. He wouldn't have blown a candle out at the end of the gallop, and I think he is sure to win the Derby after all."¹ That this gallop was a good performance is borne out by the testimony of Custance. The jockey narrates that he went on to the course to make the acquaintance of *The Rake* and to ride him in a mile spin. After pulling up, Custance states that he told the trainer how badly the horse had gone, and then, on his way

¹ Lord Chaplin's papers.

home, that he met Bloss's horses at work. He stopped to see Hermit do a fast canter over the Derby course. As usual Hermit pulled hard, and got the better of the boy coming round Tattenham Corner; and in the jockey's words—"he bounded over the ground like a cricket ball".

As the result of this smart performance and the horse's rapid recovery Captain Machell concurred in Mr. Chaplin's proposal to reclaim the services of Custance for Hermit. The request was duly made, but, on Mr. Pryor objecting, the matter was referred to the stewards. Mr. Chaplin's appeal was rightly dismissed, as his letter relinquishing Custance to the Rake's owner was decisive. The circumstances of this appeal were very curious. Hermit had broken a blood-vessel, and, because of this mishap, Mr. Chaplin had consented to the transfer of his jockey's services to The Rake. But it so happened that the news came to Harpenden on the Friday before Epsom that The Rake in his turn had broken a blood-vessel, and when Custance returned from Chantilly, after riding on the Sunday in the French Derby, he was informed of the extraordinary coincidence.

The eventful day arrived. It was May 22. Apocryphal history relates that the race for the Derby was run in a snowstorm. It is true that it was a day of miserable weather and that there were heavy showers of snow, sleet, and hail: but the saddling (for the most part), the parade, and the race itself were under a fairly clear sky. The field numbered thirty. Among them were Vauban, the hero of the Two Thousand, Marksman, The Palmer, The Rake, Julius and Van Amburgh. For the great race they were

animals of average merit. Little attention was paid to Hermit—even the race card showed no jockey's name against his—and Captain Machell and Daley (who had been engaged to ride), as they walked across the paddock to the Hawthorn Tree, attracted no followers, for their horse was, after all, only a forlorn hope. He looked rough in his coat and did not appear to have grown much or thickened. In Mr. Chaplin's own words on Hermit's appearance—"Old Bloss walked the horse about in the paddock without clothing, his coat staring from cold, and his tail tucked between his legs. Every one said what a brute he looked."¹ Certainly 66 to 1² represented his chance. How could such a horse—only a convalescent—be 10 or 12 lb. better than the second in the Guineas? What did the Stable mean by such an idle assertion? At the same time many thought that the horse moved well in his canter, his easy action carrying him lightly over the ground, now getting heavy. Mr. Chaplin has left an account of what his own views were as to Hermit's chance in the race. "I told all my friends", he writes, "that if Hermit was in the front rank as the horses came into sight at the top of the hill, I thought he would certainly win. No one, of course, believed me, and they thought me a fool."

At the post D'Estournel did his best to upset the huge field, and during the delay of half an hour the jockeys shivered under a hail-storm.³ As this cleared away the flag fell, and they were off in a poor light—

¹ Lord Chaplin's papers.

² The price as recorded in the *Calendar* was 1000 to 15.

³ For misconduct at the post three jockeys, including the rider of Marksman, were suspended until Friday in Ascot week.—*Racing Calendar*, 1867.

a confused mass of varied colour. At Tattenham Corner more than half the field were done with, and Vauban looked the best as they swept round the turn, raising high the hopes of Hastings and Danebury. Here The Rake, who had been going well on the lower ground, was in difficulties, and Custance was seen to be at work on his horse. Then Marksman showed with a slight advantage of everything, and was shouted the winner as they came alongside the stands, Grimshaw having his big chestnut horse well in hand. All at once a rose-coloured jacket appeared on the scene, and Hermit was observed to deliver a spirited challenge to Mr. Merry's horse. For a moment it was a desperate race between the pair. In the last few strides Hermit, staying on well, got the better of Marksman, and won by a neck. Vauban was third.¹

¹ The official record of this memorable Derby is subjoined. Those who are interested in coincidences will observe that Mr. Chaplin's horse defeated another called Lord Hastings. The eighty-eighth renewal of the Derby Stakes of 50 sovs. each h.ft. for three-year-old colts, 8 st. 10 lb., and fillies, 8 st. 5 lb.; the second received 100 sovs. out of the stakes; the last mile and a half to be run on the New Course (256 subs.)—£7000. Mr. Chaplin's ch.c. Hermit (Daley) 1, Mr. Merry's ch.c. Marksman (Grimshaw) 2, Duke of Beaufort's Vauban (Fordham) 3, Mr. Eastwood's br.c. Lord Hastings (Doyle), Mr. Eastwood's ch.c. Master Butterfly (Hardcastle), Mr. F. Elliott's bl.c. Leases (Jeffries), Mr. Bignell's b.c. Man of Ross (Loates), Mr. Godding's br.c. by Rataplan out of Armande (French), Mr. G. Angell's ch.c. Ben Nevis (Parry), Mr. Bowes' ch.g. Taraban (Carroll), Mr. Savile's br.g. Roquefort (H. Covey), Mr. Savile's br.c. D'Estournel (Edwards), Mr. Fleming's br.c. Van Amburgh (Challoner), Count F. de Lagranges b.c. Dragon (Hibberd), Lord Exeter's b.c. Grand Cross (Norman), Mr. J. Johnstone's b.c. Tynedale (Osborne), Mr. J. Johnstone's b.c. The Corporal (Cameron), Mr. F. Pryor's The Rake (Custance), The Duke of Newcastle's Julius (J. Mann), Mr. H. Temple's b.c. Fitz Ivan (Payne), Sir J. Hawley's br.c. The Palmer (Wells), Marquis of Hastings' br.c. Uncas (Salter), Mr. A. Heathcote's ch.c. Gipsy King (Snowden), Mr. Gilby's b.f. Skysail (Huxtable), Duke of Hamilton's br.c. Wild Moor (Clement), Sir R. Bulkeley's br.c. Owain Glyndwr (Goater), Lord Coventry's ch.c. The Rescue (J. Adams), Mr. Crawley's b.c. Redbourne (Morris), Mr. Wynn's b.g. Bedlamite (R. Viney), Lord Uxbridge's b.c. Distin (Cannon). Won by a neck—bad third. D'Estournel was left at the post. The betting on the race is

The result of the race was received with amazement, and many believed that Marksman had won. Waugh always declared that Grimshaw on Marksman threw the race away by giving too much attention to Vauban. "How do you account for that, Waugh?" said Mr. Merry, immediately after the race. "I don't know, sir," replied the bitterly disappointed trainer; "you'd better ask Grimshaw." At the same time, whatever justice there was in this criticism of the jockey, it must be remembered that Marksman was not a sound horse, and that he had "a leg" when he ran for the Derby. In his next race—the Prince of Wales Stakes at Ascot—he broke down, and was never able to run again. Fordham, who rode Vauban, also came in for censure, and was thought to have ridden one of his few bad races on the Duke of Beaufort's horse. It may have been so, for this eminent rider was sickening for the illness which later on kept him out of the saddle for some time. It must, however, be observed that Epsom was the worst possible course for Vauban with his proppy forelegs and long pasterns; and many good judges declared that they saw that the horse could not act at all on the descent.

As for Hermit, there is no doubt that Daley exactly carried out Captain Machell's orders in waiting with his mount, and then coming with one long run to beat the leader close on the post. The end had indeed been dramatic, for the race had resolved itself into a duel between the Eltham chestnuts. Two years before Marksman had followed Hermit into the sale

thus officially quoted. 6 to 4 Vauban; 7 to 1 The Palmer; 8 to 1 Van Amburgh; 9 to 1 The Rake; 10 to 1 Marksman; 16 to 1 Julius and D'Estournel, etc., with odds ranging to the extreme limit of 1000 to 6 Redbourne. The present Lord Coventry's horse, The Rescue, started at 1000 to 6.



HERMIT, WINNER OF THE DERBY, 1867

ring, and again he followed him, this time up the sacred slope that leads to the primitive weighing room.

And Henry Chaplin ! He had won the Derby. He was in the hey-day of his youth. He had drained with unsparing lips the full enjoyment of winning the greatest race in the world, and he had done so under conditions which made the victory at once a triumph and a personal vindication. With a free and ardent spirit he had played high—very high—and he had met with that curious and insidious good luck which at times attends the enterprise of the beginner. His success had been extraordinary and his gains were great. Fortune, who had denied the Olympian prize to men like Lord George Bentinck, the Duke of Beaufort, and Lord Glasgow—suitors who had wooed her with long years of patient endeavour, and with thousands of their substance—had flung it into his lap after she had once threatened him with almost certain failure.

For Captain Machell, too, it was a great occasion. Throughout the days of anxiety he had kept his head. His faith in Hermit seems never to have wavered. He stood committed to heavy bets, but he saw them out.¹ Although he formally encouraged Mr. Chaplin in his effort to regain Custance's services, it is likely enough that he did not regard the substitution of Daley as prejudicial to Hermit's chance.² He knew that the horse was in dread of Custance, and often

¹ Lord Chaplin's papers. Mr. Lambton, in *Men and Horses I have known*, has a different version of Machell's bets on Hermit (see p. 129), but the weight of evidence is in favour of the statement in the text.

² The present Lord Coventry has informed the writer that he well remembers that before the race Mr. Chaplin consulted him about the merits of Daley as a jockey. Lord Coventry had frequently employed Daley to ride his horses.

trembled when the jockey approached him. He would, therefore, in all probability give his running for a lad with nice hands—one who, as it turned out, was capable of winning the Oaks that week on Hippia. It must have been a great moment when Mr. Chaplin and Machell shook hands after the race, and when Machell helped his patron into a brougham supplied with a second edition of luncheon. While the two sat there a disconsolate young subaltern—a Rifleman—walked by. Mr. Chaplin hailed him and commanded him to drink the health of Hermit in a bumper of champagne.¹ As the youth had lost heavily over Marksman the situation was rather perplexing; but the champagne he knew would be good—it would serve to drown his sorrows—and so he complied. The young soldier, who only died in January 1925, was buried with all the pomp and pageantry befitting his rank as the senior Field Marshal in the British Army.²

The next day Chaplin wrote the following rather breathless letter to Captain Machell :

To Captain J. O. MACHELL,
Post Office, Epsom.

(Posted Charing Cross—May 24, 1867.)

9 DOVER STREET,
PICCADILLY, W.,
Thursday.

MY DEAR MACHELL—I had no time yesterday to say one half of what I wished to, and I can't help sending one line

¹ The comic Press of the hour associated the possible triumph of Hermit with another wine. "Information", it said, "about the horse may be obtained on the morning of the race in an envelope Hermetically sealed. If the Hermit passes the Judge first, drink his health and that of his Chap(a)in in the wine, of which every well regulated barouche will have an abundant supply, Hermitage!"

² Lord Grenfell only a month before his death related this incident to the writer.

to-day, to tell you how much I feel I have to thank *you* for—and pleasure as it is to me to have won the Derby and great a stake as I have landed, thanks entirely to your exertions I may honestly say that it is at least an equal part of the pleasure that you should have had so great a triumph. For there is but one opinion everywhere and even your enemies are obliged to admit that a more signal and more well deserved triumph than yours, no man has ever had before, and after all the troubles and annoyances you have had to go through this season, it is the more gratifying to me, as it must be to you, to have met with such success at last.

I am not eloquent in expressing my thanks to you, but you will take the will for the deed.—Ever yours,

HENRY CHAPLIN.

In later years Mr. Chaplin recorded that Captain Machell was the best judge of form he ever knew. “He carried it all in his head and never had occasion to consult a book.”

To his trainer and jockey Mr. Chaplin was, perhaps, unduly generous. It is invidious to criticise generosity when conditions are exceptional and an owner’s profits are great. But to toss a fortune to a servant on the successful issue of a race is *pessimi exempli*, especially when the owner of moderate means, who does not bet, has to consider the question of fair and reasonable recognition. Such observations, however, are no longer relevant to the status of the trainer of the present day. To the skill and practice of the stableman he now affects to unite the politer labours of assisted authorship; and, relying on literary aid of varying merit, he proceeds to load the libraries with his Recollections, or the bookstalls with his contributions to the Sunday press.

For his ride on Hermit, Daley¹ received a present of £1000. Of Bloss Mr. Chaplin writes as follows :

It was only after the race that I learnt that old Bloss had slept in the horse's box every night for three months before the race on a little iron bedstead which they still show at Bedford Cottage, and I was so touched by his fidelity that as soon as I got home I sent him a cheque for £5000. Old Bloss I believe never made a bet in his life.²

The week following the Derby Mr. Chaplin went down to Newmarket. It was a bright, sunny day, and in his box the Derby winner stood "bright as a new pin". Turning to his trainer Mr. Chaplin said, "He seems much better in his coat to-day than from all accounts he did in the paddock at Epsom." Whereupon Bloss replied—looking down upon his own new suit of clothes—"Yes, and so do I, too, Squire!"³

Punch, of course, had its joke in connection with Hermit's victory. In a paragraph entitled "Pious Uses on the Turf" it wrote : "Who after this year's Derby will dare say that Racing is a sinful amusement? Think of the money carried off from a Rake by a Hermit for the benefit of a Chaplin!"

One more figure in the Epsom drama remains. To Lord Hastings the victory of Hermit was the beginning

¹ It was a curious but fortunate circumstance that Daley should have been available to ride Hermit, especially as there were 30 horses in the Derby field. Moreover, Daley was an experienced jockey. In 1861 he wore the present Lord Coventry's colours on Elcho (5 st. 13 lb.), and in the next year on Bobadill (6 st. 6 lb.) in the Goodwood Stakes, winning on both occasions. As a light-weight he had met with much success, winning, among other races, the Stewards' Cup in 1859 on Maid of Kent (6 st. 7 lb.) from a field of 32 horses. His annual record of races won was always respectable, though he lost some riding as his weight increased.

² Lord Chaplin's papers.

³ Lord Chaplin's papers.

of the end. He may have seemed unconcerned as he drove away from the Downs to dine and spend a merry evening at Richmond ; but the gaiety must have been affected, for he knew well that he had met with a disaster which was almost irretrievable. "Hermit fairly broke my heart," was his avowal as a dying man, and, doubtless, he spoke the truth. What was the amount which his infatuated prejudice cost him ? For years past it has been stated in sums of widely differing magnitude ; but Mr. Chaplin's correspondence, which has been preserved, reveals the fact that Hastings wrote to him with the information that he had lost £120,000 on the Derby. Although there were painful circumstances which must have rendered any approach on Mr. Chaplin's part extremely difficult, he, nevertheless, with much dexterity and good feeling, sent Sir F. Johnstone on an embassy to the man whose fortunes, he felt, had, for the moment, been shattered by the victory of Hermit. The message was to the effect that if it was any convenience to him, such sums as might be due need not be paid on the following Monday. In answer to this most considerate and characteristically generous suggestion,¹ Hastings replied in a letter² (undated) addressed to his benefactor at the Arlington Club :

MY DEAR CHAPLIN—I can't tell you how much obliged I am for your kindness to me. I would sooner cut off my hand than ask anybody to do such a thing, but as you say

¹ Sir John Astley was also the recipient of Mr. Chaplin's generosity. Knowing that his friend had lost heavily over the race, Mr. Chaplin told him to put his losses to his name and that he would pay them. Sir John mentions the incident in his book.

² This and the following letters are transcribed from the originals found among Lord Chaplin's papers.

it will not inconvenience you I shall take advantage of your offer for a short time. But you may depend upon my doing my utmost to repay you as soon as possible though you know as well as I do that however well off a man may be to get £120,000 in 24 hours is rather a hard job. I am just off to Paris as I am sick of being pointed out as a man who has lost such a sum. If you do not particularly want the "Sister to the Duke" at the Hampton Court Sale I should much like to buy her, but I am afraid it is useless opposing you now.

With very many thanks, yours very sincerely,

HASTINGS.

This is a remarkable letter ; but it fits the writer *ad unguem*. There is no trace of any remembrance of the gross injury he had done to his correspondent less than three years before : no touch of the ritual of penitence, but merely an easy acceptance of an important favour, and a rather bored reference to his own unenviable notoriety as

Damn'd at once to ruin and to fame,

leading him to seek the temporary seclusion of a holiday in Paris. And then the debtor, whose financial embarrassment was overwhelming, calmly asks his obliging creditor if he proposes to compete with him at an auction for a yearling filly at the forthcoming Hampton Court sale !

Contemporary records show that this yearling—by Stockwell out of Bay Celia—was in appearance small but useful ; and that "it was on her big brother's account that Lord Hastings at the sale bought her for 750 guineas" ! Mr. Chaplin, although he was a large purchaser on the same occasion, magnanimously stood aside and thus met his correspondent's wishes.

"The short time" mentioned in Hastings' letter

was evidently extended, and Mr. Chaplin must have reminded him of his obligation. Hastings writes a letter—undated :

MY DEAR CHAPLIN—I got your note all right. I can promise you for a certainty *all* the money by the end of this month. I hope 10,000 [sic] at the end of this week. In the meantime you shall have any security you like if you will ask your man of business to call at South Sea House, Threadneedle Street, London, I will give directions to do whatever he may require. I am awfully obliged to you for having waited so long. If these d——d fools of lawyers would get through the sale of my place in Scotland I should have been saved thousands but you know what a time they take.

Believe me, yours very sincerely, HASTINGS.

The business dragged on, and Mr. Chaplin renewed his reminder. Hastings was at Baden, and from there wrote the following letter, marked “Immediate” :

Monday, Septr. 2nd.

DEAR CHAPLIN—I have just received yours, and I am extremely sorry that you should have been put to any inconvenience by my not paying up at the beginning of last month. But it is not my fault, but my cursed old lawyer, who takes such an infernal time getting the money, though I have done nothing the last month but write and see him about it. However, now I shall go and get the money myself at once, so you may be certain it shall be paid this week, if I have to pay 100 p.c. for it, as I hate owing anybody money. I have had a dreadful time since Goodwood but hope we shall do better at Doncaster.—Yours in great haste,

HASTINGS.

In connection with Hastings’ lament, and his lengthened indebtedness to Mr. Chaplin, it may be of interest to mention that to the Goodwood Meeting in

question his trainer took sixteen horses, and among them they carried off fourteen races ! The stable record for the year ran up to 146 victories.

Rarely has any trainer had in his hands a more brilliant collection of two-year-olds than had John Day of Danebury in the year of Hermit's Derby. Of these the most distinguished were Lady Elizabeth, The Earl, See Saw, Athena, and Europa ; but the first named was the queen of the stable. She challenged the memories of the best winners of the race-course, for her stamina was even more remarkable than her speed. After several successes in the early part of the year she was, in view of her Ascot engagement, asked a very severe question. At three o'clock in the morning of Tuesday in Ascot week she was tried over the exacting six furlongs of the Stockbridge race-course to be better than a five-year-old who had just won the Salisbury Cup over a mile, and who was to prove that he could give 66 lb. to some two-year-olds who were capable of winning races. Day at once reported this most extraordinary performance to Hastings, and the head lad without delay brought the filly to Ascot. In the race preceding the New Stakes—the Gold Cup—Lecturer in Hastings' colours had beaten one of the best fields that ever assembled for that event. Hastings won a very large stake—contemporary writers put it at many thousands—and then proceeded to back Lady Elizabeth in earnest for the New Stakes. The filly started at even money, and won in a canter by six lengths. Lecturer was pulled out the next day for the Alexandra Plate. Although odds had to be laid on him, Hastings backed the little horse heavily, and again he won—this time easily. With the profit

on these enormous outlays Hastings must have largely reduced his Epsom losses, and Mr. Chaplin was, undoubtedly, justified in reminding his debtor of his obligations. Lady Elizabeth continued her winning career until her fatal race in the Middle Park Plate. Fordham on that occasion took unreasonable liberties with the mare, trusting to her exceptional abilities, and was honest enough to admit that he ought to have won many a length. The wonderful creature atoned for this defeat two days later, when over the same course she met Julius in a match for £1000 a side. Julius, who as a three-year-old, had won the Cesarewitch three days before, carrying 8 stone, was asked to give only 9 lb. to the Danebury prodigy.¹ The betting on the race was very heavy, for Hastings had received a crushing blow in the Middle Park Plate. Slight odds were laid on Julius; but, after an exciting and punishing struggle, he owned defeat by a short head. A costly victory indeed for Hastings. Heartbroken by the severity of the effort against the older horse, shaken in health and rendered irritable in disposition, the poor filly wintered badly. Every trace of her form disappeared, and the thousands wagered on her Derby chance in the following year—she started at 7 to 4—passed to the Ring. Her discomfiture at Epsom was widely deplored, for with the general public she was almost a romantic favourite. In *Punch's* prophecy of the Derby of 1868 there may be read: “And now place for the Lady Elizabeth. I take off my hat to that darling; and if wishes were horses, and beggars could ride, I'm the beggar that

¹ In the match Julius, ridden by Daley, carried 8 st. 11 lb., while Fordham weighed out at 8 st. 2 lb. for the filly.

would ride her into glory and win the battle of Hastings!"

This brief story of Lady Elizabeth is here related because it gives the determining cause of Hastings' exit from the Turf. Never again did he cross Mr. Chaplin's path. The failure of the famous filly as a three-year-old—the squalid story of the Earl—and some other dark and unexplained passages of racing scandal were followed by an avalanche of money troubles. Pursued relentlessly by his unpaid creditors of the Ring, and by crowds of bill-discounters, Hastings became a broken man. He went yachting in search of health which he never found, and then came home to die. He was only twenty-six. The callow youth who some six seasons earlier had made his first appearance on Newmarket Heath before he was enfolded in the toils of the confederacy of Danebury—who in the mad spirit of fatal optimism had believed that it was his destiny to break the Ring—who had wits enough to master all the intricacies of public form, but not the sense to combat the worst passions of the gambler—had failed in his purpose, as all men will fail, who engage heavily in the unequal strife.

Hermit, looking much better than he did at Epsom, ran at Ascot with success. Ridden by Custance, he won a Biennial over the old Mile, beating Julius and four others. His admirers laid 5 to 1 on him and he was a clever winner by a length and a half. The next day he was again successful, winning the St. James' Palace Stakes, and beating Sir Joseph Hawley's colt The Palmer, and the Duke of Hamilton's Wild Moor. He won this race by three lengths. He was then

reserved for the St. Leger, forfeiting engagements at Goodwood, Brighton, Stockton, and York.

There is some evidence that Hermit did not do well in his preparation for the Doncaster race, and it seems clear that he had been easily beaten in a gallop by his stable companion Blinkhoolie, who was found to be nearly 10 lbs. in front of him. Thereupon, Captain Machell—seconded by Custance—propounded the idea to his patron that Blinkhoolie should run instead of Hermit for the St. Leger. To this startling communication Mr. Chaplin declined to listen, preferring to consult his own feelings and the regard he had for the committed interests of an expectant public. It is, however, quite possible that Blinkhoolie would have been a valuable deputy for the Derby winner. He was a bay son of Rataplan and Queen Mary and was a really fine stayer. He was allotted only 7 stone in the Cesarewitch and was backed down to 2 to 1 for that race. He was, indeed, a racing certainty : but the lad, Jeffreys, who rode him in the race could do nothing with him, and he only filled the fourth place to the winner, Julius, who was actually giving him a stone ! With a strong jockey, capable of extending him, he must have won. It was only another case—and many instances can be recalled—of a horse failing in a race where the leniency of the handicap is offset by the weakness of the jockey. In proof of Blinkhoolie's merit it may be mentioned that he won for Mr. Chaplin both the Vase and the Alexandra Plate at Ascot in the following year.

In the month before Doncaster Mr. Chaplin had been abroad. It was while he was on the Continent that he had received the proposal that Blinkhoolie

and not Hermit should represent him in the St. Leger. It was, therefore, with anxious interest that, on his return home, he went to renew acquaintance with the Derby winner. He was greatly concerned at his horse's appearance. He bore signs of a stiff preparation for his Doncaster engagement. Captain Machell and Bloss were at once brought to book. Mr. Chaplin complained that the lesson of the Derby had been ignored : that they should have remembered that the horse with his delicate constitution did best with light and easy work on the training ground, and that it had been a mistake to subject him to the test of long and searching gallops. However, the mischief had been done. Mr. Chaplin in later years, when referring to the circumstances of his visit to Hermit before the St. Leger, stated that the moment he saw the horse he was prepared for his failure on the Town Moor.¹ Under these circumstances, the proposal of the stable manager to run Blinkhoolie instead of Hermit at Doncaster can be left as a question of rather interesting speculation.

Throughout the summer Hermit was quoted at 2 to 1 for the St. Leger ; but on the Monday and Tuesday of Doncaster race week the market had moved more in favour of Achievement. At flag-fall there was little difference in the rate—Hermit being supported at 5 to 4 and the mare at 75 to 40.² Vauban and Julius were quoted at 12 to 1. There were twelve runners for the race. In the paddock no animal

¹ Thus related by Lord Chaplin to the writer.

² In the *Calendar*, Hermit is described as The Hermit in the record of the St. Leger : but, in the Cup, the name is again Hermit. The winner of the Two Thousand in 1854, who ran third to Andover and King Tom in the Derby, is generally described as The Hermit.

showed more improvement than Achievement. The result of fourteen weeks' retirement from the race-course had transformed the dark-brown sister of Lord Lyon, and no one professed more astonishment at her appearance and condition than Custance, who had ridden her in the Oaks, when she had succumbed to Hippia by a length. When Hermit was mounted by his jockey a murmuring cheer greeted the rose jacket ; and as the chestnut, with his head in the air, moved through the dense crowd, and it was seen that the Derby winner was going out to do battle for his popular owner, he received that tribute which Yorkshiremen delight to offer upon their local altar of hero-worship. Julius, too, greatly pleased his friends, and in condition reflected the skill and finish of his trainer, M. Dawson. Before the canter, Hermit, always uneasy in Custance's hands, required much coaxing to take his place, and, as they moved to the post, his action was thought to lack the long and easy sweep of the mare. In the race Chaloner on Achievement had eyes only for Hermit. As the Rifle Butts were reached the horse and mare drew away—the mare on the rails, where Scott in former years always tried to be at this point in the race. At the distance it was evident that Achievement would win, for Custance was pressing Hermit. The horse never shirked, and at the Stand he seemed to be catching the mare ; in this he failed, and the verdict against him at the finish was a length. Julius was a head behind Hermit, while Vauban was fourth.

Hermit ran in the Cup on Friday. He looked less nervous than he did on the St. Leger day ; but the crowd followed Achievement. To show the opinion

formed on the running of the two competitors on the Wednesday, odds were now laid on the mare ; while 5 to 1 was offered against the Derby winner. In the race they lay close to each other and so they went over the hill and came into the straight. The rest of the field were beaten off, and Hermit and Achievement ran home by themselves. For some strides they were side by side ; but, after passing the distance, Achievement went on to win with consummate ease.

With sound philosophy Mr. Chaplin was understood to say that the Cup made it unnecessary to explain the St. Leger. In this he was wise. Achievement was a very remarkable mare. She had swept the board as a two-year-old. In the spring of 1867 she had not been at her best, but after Ascot she rested until the York Meeting, when she cantered away from Vauban. On the day of the St. Leger she was at the top of her form. Moreover, she always beat Hermit whenever they met both at two and three years of age. Sad to say, this brilliant mare died just as her Turf career ended.

But poor Hermit was not at the end of his labours. Although, delicate horse as he was, he had just covered a Cup course of more than two miles, he was pulled out again the same afternoon for a £500 sweep-stake to be run over the St. Leger course. It was really asking the horse too much.¹ It is true he had

¹ Another severe test of racing a three-year-old at Doncaster is found in the case of Voltigeur in 1850. On the Wednesday Lord Zetland's horse ran a dead-heat with Rassborough for the St. Leger, and won the decider soon after 5 o'clock on the same afternoon. The following day he walked over for the Scarborough Stakes, and on the Friday he ran and beat the Flying Dutchman in the race for the Doncaster Cup. But the grandson of Blacklock, from the union of Voltaire with Martha Lynn, was an exceptionally stout horse.

only two moderate animals to meet and in the race he beat them by a length; but he never won again.

Later in the year at Newmarket he failed to give Friponnier—a very good horse—7 lb. across the flat. In this race Hermit conceded 11 lb. to Hippia, the winner of the Oaks, and 7 lb. to Julius, who in a fortnight's time ran away with the Cesarewitch, carrying 8 stone. At the Second October Meeting Hermit was again beaten by Friponnier—this time by ten lengths, and in the Newmarket Derby he failed to beat Longchamps at the difference of a stone. It had been well for his record if his Turf history had ended in the year of his great triumph; but it was decided otherwise. As a four-year-old he ran seven times. Twice he was beaten by Julius, and on the second occasion the defeat was a bad one. One of these engagements was a match for £1000 a side over the T.M.M., run at the First Spring Meeting. Julius carried 8 st. 10 lb. and Hermit 8 st. 9 lb., odds being laid on Julius, who won by two lengths. Twice Hermit significantly paid forfeit to The Palmer in matches which had been arranged; and thenceforward, with lustre sadly tarnished, he ran, but with no credit to a Derby winner. At the end of the season he quitted the race-course for Blankney.

There his reputation gained an added distinction, for his seed became mighty upon earth, and the generations of his children were blessed.¹ Five classic winners acknowledged him as their sire. In 1881 his

¹ Between 1873 and 1897 Hermit's stock won 846 races of the value of £856,699. The National Hunt records also show the potent influence of Hermit blood in the pedigrees of many steeplechase horses.

daughter Thebais won the One Thousand and the Oaks. In 1882 Shotover won the Two Thousand and the Derby, and St. Marguerite the One Thousand. In 1883 St. Blaise won the Derby, and in 1885 Lonely won the Oaks. Besides these his name was carried on by Trappist, Peter, Holy Friar, Timothy, and Out of Bounds, and, later, by Nellie, Marden, Queen Adelaide, St. Helena, Philosophy, and Tristan. He gained credit, subsequently, as the sire of Friars Balsam, Heaume, and Alicante. Of Friars Balsam the late John Porter had the highest opinion. He proved as a two-year-old to be of exceptional merit, and his experienced trainer confidently expected him to win the classics of 1888. But he suffered from mouth trouble and failed in the Two Thousand ; and, though he beat Minting in the Champion Stakes, he was always an invalid and was soon retired to the stud. In this connection it may be mentioned that Porter records that he "always looked upon Hermit as a good horse who might have failed in the Derby, had not Captain Machell been compelled to give him an easy time before the race".

Hermit, full of years and honours, died on the 29th April 1890. His skeleton is still preserved in the Museum of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.¹ Mr. Chaplin had one of his hoofs mounted and then presented it to the Prince of Wales, who acknowledged the gift in an autograph letter in the following terms :

¹ It seems a pity that Hermit did not join the select community of the departed in the Mausoleum of South Kensington, where are assembled Eclipse, Stockwell, St. Simon, Ormonde, Persimmon, Isinglass, St. Frusquin, William III., Bend Or, Royal Hampton, and Donovan.

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,
July 27/90.

MY DEAR HARRY—How kind of you to have sent me the hoof of dear old Hermit! so prettily mounted, which I shall always greatly value and constantly use as an inkstand.

I am also very much touched by the kind expressions in your letter wishing me good luck with my racehorses. Though I can never expect to have the good fortune which attended the Dukes of Portland and Westminster, still I hope with patience to win one or more of the classic races with a horse bred by myself.

I sincerely hope you may yet be able to come to Goodwood for a part of the time, at any rate.

Thanking you again for your kind remembrance of me and giving me so interesting a souvenir of your "best friend".

From yours very sincerely, ALBERT EDWARD.

P.S.—I shall always take the shoe about with me.

The Prince's letter is of real interest. It shows the spirit in which he approached the problem of horse-breeding and racing, and the philosophy he always displayed in the varying fortunes of the hour. He, indeed, had his reward. Perdita gave him two classic winners in Persimmon and Diamond Jubilee. To the wise purchaser, on his behalf, of this great matron he once said, "When you bought her you as good as made me a present of a quarter of a million of money."

On another occasion when the Prince had lost a mare named Counterpane, and Mr. Chaplin had offered his sympathy, the same spirit is shown :

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,
Wednesday morning.

MY DEAR HARRY—I am very much touched by your kindness in writing to condole with me on the sad end of poor little Counterpane who never looked better, and Porter fully

expected her to win the Cup. But I must bear it with philosophy as I know what the glorious uncertainties of the Turf are.

From yours very sincerely,

A. E.

At the close of the year 1867 Mr. Chaplin somewhat reduced his stud, selling among others Breadalbane and Vespasian. For the latter he only received 550 guineas. Vespasian by Newminster out of Vesta had been acquired by Mr. Chaplin from Mr. W. G. Craven, for whom he had won two races in 1865. In 1866 Mr. Chaplin ran the horse on fourteen occasions, on four of which he was successful; but as he failed to win a race in 1867 he sold him, and the horse became the property of Sir C. Legard. Mr. Chaplin was unwise in parting with this good horse, for he won no less than twelve races in the course of the following year, and in 1869 greatly distinguished himself at Goodwood by winning, on the same day, the Duke of Richmond's Handicap and the Chesterfield Cup. In the latter race he carried the welter weight of 10 st. 4 lb., the bottom weight being 5 st. 7 lb. A fine performance; but over the same course at Goodwood the next year Rosicrucian beat him with great ease.

In 1868 Mr. Chaplin's stable was rather in the shade, although Blinkhoolie did good service at Ascot; and a review of the situation doubtless led to the decision to make important reductions in the string in training. The Hunt Cup at Ascot this year was watched by Mr. Chaplin and his connections with undisguised disappointment. The story is curiously interesting. On the afternoon of the purchase of Hermit, Mr. Chaplin, among other ventures, acquired a yearling by Marsyas out of Diomedia, for whom he

gave 750 guineas. In the autumn of 1866 at Newmarket this animal, under the name of Satyr, won a sweepstake of £70, the winner to be sold for £100, *if demanded*. The two-year-old was the medium of a spirited gamble, and was an easy winner from a worthless colt called Red Shoes, belonging to Sir Joseph Hawley. After the race Sir Joseph "demanded" Satyr, and was deaf to the most earnest entreaties of Mr. Chaplin and his friends to forgo the claim.¹ *En revanche*, Lord Westmorland claimed Red Shoes for Mr. Chaplin, to the great delight of Sir Joseph, who was really anxious to get rid of the colt; and wisely too, for the only time Red Shoes wore Mr. Chaplin's colours was two days later, when he ran third in a selling race.

The subsequent career of Satyr was remarkable. As a three-year-old he won for his new owner a small handicap at Ascot, and then Sir Joseph put him aside for the Cambridgeshire. In a trial gallop for that race he fell down, regained his feet, and then bolted over the Downs, crossing roads and sheep tracks. When recovered, it was found that he had sprung both suspensory ligaments, and so that was the end of his racing that year. But the horse got over his trouble, and was prepared for the Hunt Cup, for which Hawley backed him heavily. His weight was 8 st. 11 lb. A week before Ascot the ligaments went again. Still he was sent to Ascot, where, when he was

¹ This was not the only occasion when Mr. Chaplin and Hawley were in collision over a claim. In 1870 Mr. Chaplin had leased a filly from I'Anson, called Pandore for her racing career, and entered her for a selling race at Ascot, which she won. Hawley claimed her, and in spite of Mr. Chaplin's urgent appeal refused to return her to him. Mr. Chaplin, of course, had to pay I'Anson a heavy sum to compensate him, as lessor, for the loss of the mare.

not walking, he was standing with his legs in cold water. He had one canter, but the jockey who rode him was terrified lest he should fall down. Owner and trainer, after debate, settled to run the horse in the Hunt Cup, and to their utter astonishment he won pretty easily. Sir Joseph had been left with his bets, and was a very large winner. As Satyr passed the post Mr. Chaplin must have lamented the stable policy in risking a good animal in a selling race, even though for the moment the gamble involved was successful.

In the spring of 1869 the Squire disposed of nearly all his horses. They realised 8135 guineas—the top price being given for Broomielaw, an unprofitable purchase, who at the stud conferred his malignant temper upon most of his stock.

But Mr. Chaplin had not by any means relinquished the rôle of owner. In 1870 he appears as the owner of Pearl, a daughter of Newminster and Caller Ou—the sensational winner of the St. Leger of 1861. The filly had merit, for she won the Woodcote from twelve others and also secured three other races during the season. At this time Mr. Chaplin had horses with I'Anson at Hambleton and afterwards at Malton—among them a useful mare called Fairy Form which he bought on I'Anson's recommendation. She won several races ; as did Hazeldean, a filly by Cathedral out of Nutbush who was very speedy over short courses. Later on, he mated this black filly with Cremorne, and to the Derby winner of 1872 she produced the flying Kermesse. Lord Rosebery bought Kermesse as a foal, and she won for him several races.

In 1872 Mr. Chaplin had a great local triumph when winning the Lincolnshire Handicap with Guy Dayrell. There was much rejoicing over this success. Surprise was expressed at the liberal odds offered against the horse who had received considerate treatment from the handicapper. With five others he was sold at the end of the year.

Two years later Mr. Chaplin had a fairly successful season, Hazeldean and Stray Shot—a Toxophilite filly—securing eight races between them. So high was the opinion of Stray Shot that in the spring of 1875 she was matched at Newmarket with Galopin over the Rowley Mile. It was not a very wise proceeding. Galopin was an exceptional horse, and it was not surprising that 11 to 8 was laid on his chance and that he won by eight lengths at his ease.

In the following July, Mr. Chaplin sold off many of his horses in training ; but, wisely, only leased Stray Shot for the remainder of the racing year. Mated with Hermit she bred Shotover, who won for the Duke of Westminster the Two Thousand and the Derby of 1882.

But the close of this year was associated with a great disappointment in the race for the Cambridgeshire. Mr. Chaplin had retained in his stable with I'Anson a horse, by Macaroni out of Bumblekite, called Khedive. He tried this animal with Pearl and Reverberation, the latter having run second to Atlantic in the Two Thousand. Khedive in the gallop beat Pearl six lengths and the other a length. The big handicap then looked a certainty for Mr. Chaplin's candidate, and this view was confirmed when on the Monday at Newmarket Pearl won the Cambridgeshire

Trial Handicap in a canter. Accordingly, as he also ran Pearl, Mr. Chaplin declared to win with Khedive, who was favourite at 5 to 1. The horse, however, made no show in the race, which was won by Peut-être, carrying 6 st. 10 lb.

The last occasion when the once famous colours were first past the post was in 1897. Mr. Chaplin had bought at Doncaster a yearling bay filly, Yester-year, by Melanion out of Yesterling, which had been bred by Mr. Sneyd in 1895, and sent her to be trained by Wadlow at Shifnal. At Newmarket—at the First Spring Meeting—she suffered a head defeat ; but the following week she won the Mostyn Two-year-old Plate at Chester. Strange coincidence ! Thirty-two years before the young Squire had won his first race under the Rules of Racing on the famous Chester Course, and on the same course the last winner in the rose-coloured jacket was destined to be successful. The filly in 1898 won the September Handicap at Manchester ; but thereafter, though she fulfilled several engagements, she was unsuccessful. At the stud her produce met with no success and she was ultimately exported to Austria.

In September 1918 Mr. Chaplin was tempted for the last time to purchase a yearling. It was a rather humble venture : a faint lunar reflection of the noon-day glory which once surrounded his enterprises as an intrepid purchaser. He gave sixty guineas for a half-brother to Night Hawk, who will be remembered as an unexpected and very moderate winner of the St. Leger in 1913. The yearling was by Great Sport, and Mr. Chaplin named him Great Fun. But he belied his name, for he was a wayward and very disappoint-

ing animal. In 1919 he appears in Mr. Chaplin's name; but the Duke of Portland acquiring a share in him, he ran in the Duke's colours at Lewes in 1920, when he gained his solitary success. The same year he was sold at the December sales at Newmarket.

Earlier in this chapter an account has been given of Mr. Chaplin's first success in the sport of steeple-chasing. Two years later—in the year of Hermit's Derby—he was again successful at a National Hunt Meeting. On this occasion the Grand National Hunt Steeplechase was run at Bedford, where a very fine line of four miles of good hunting country was made available. Kimbolton and Althorp contributed large parties, and leaders of the Atherstone and Rufford hunts were present. Mr. Chaplin ran Emperor III., an own brother to the horse which had competed with such success at Wetherby, and described as one of the neatest hunters ever seen. He was perfect in condition, bright and clear in eye and coat—a perfect type of the steeplechase horse of those days. Mr. Bee Coventry rode him in the rose jacket, which showed up well in the sunshine as the bay horse took fence after fence without putting a foot wrong. As they came to the water the race rested with three only of the field, but Emperor had more left in him, and at the last won as he pleased. The field had numbered sixteen, and by common consent the success of Mr. Chaplin's horse was mainly due to the brilliant riding of Mr. Coventry, who never lay an inch out of his ground and nursed his horse beautifully and with perfect judgment. Emperor was trained by Boxall, belonging to Mr. Chaplin's hunt stable, and on this

occasion there was no objection on the score of professional assistance.

Once more Mr. Chaplin won the important Steeple-chase. This time the course was a line in the Cottenham country. Schiedam was Mr. Chaplin's nomination, a bay, five years old, by Amsterdam, who, with Mr. J. M. Richardson in the saddle, was a good favourite for the race at 4 to 1 in a field of fifteen.

In the Grand National Mr. Chaplin made two attempts to achieve success. In 1872 he ran two horses—Snowstorm and Rhysworth. He declared to win with Rhysworth. Snowstorm did not show prominently in the race, and Rhysworth, ridden by Boxall, fell at Bechers' Brook. The race was won by Casse Tête, a washed-out chestnut mare who carried 10 stone and had been bought by her owner, Mr. Brayley, for £210 out of a selling race. Casse Tête was reckoned a lucky winner, as but for twisting a plate and cutting his foot the second would have won the race. At all events, this was the opinion of Mr. J. M. Richardson, who rode Schiedam in the colours of Lord Eglinton. The field included some very good horses—among them the Lamb and Scot Grey.

In 1873 Mr. Chaplin entertained a large party at Blankney for the Lincoln Spring Meeting. After racing on the first day the guests, escorted by their host, paid a ceremonial visit to Rhysworth, who was engaged to run in the Grand National later in the week. The horse had been trained at Blankney and had given every satisfaction to Boxall. In the race he was handicapped at 11 st. 8 lb., or 10 lb. more than he

had carried in the previous year. Rhysworth was much the best steeplechase horse Mr. Chaplin ever owned. He was by Skirmisher out of Vertumna, and had been fourth in Pretender's Derby of 1869. As a two-year-old he had won for Mr. Henry Savile, who bred him, seven out of fifteen races. After the Derby his career was not particularly conspicuous, and Mr. Chaplin bought him as a five-year-old for 350 guineas. The horse took kindly to jumping.

On the occasion of such a race party at Blankney Mr. Chaplin reigned as a princely host. His guests included not only the sportsmen of the countryside, but also the chiefs of the racing world. At dinner in the large dining-room his friends might look up to the gallery, where hung the life-sized portrait of Hermit—inspiring hopes that the host might add the classic steeplechase to his record as a Derby winner. And as the rare vintages went round, even the Admiral—the Rhadamanthus of the Turf—would raise his voice and delight the squires of Lincolnshire and his colleagues of the Jockey Club with a drinking song in celebration of the Rhine.

Rhysworth started second favourite for the National at 8 to 1, and was again ridden by Boxall. He made a good show in the race. He landed first on the race-course, and, as they came round the bend, he was seen to be full of running. The crowd cheered loudly the apparent victory of the popular colours. Then Mr. J. M. Richardson brought up the game little Disturbance, and the two horses rose together at the last fence, almost touching each other. To Richardson's delight—he knew Rhysworth as well as his own mount—he saw Mr. Chaplin's horse lay his ears back

flat, and he realised what that meant on the part of his old friend. True enough. Rhysworth, finding himself collared, refused to try another yard, and allowed Disturbance to beat him by six lengths in a canter. It was a fine performance on the part of the winner, for he was conceding Rhysworth—a good class horse—a year and 3 lb. Moreover, Rhysworth gave signal proof of his ability the following day, when carrying 12 st. 7 lb. he won the Sefton by ten lengths, beating among others Reugny, who was destined the next year to win the Grand National. It will be observed that in this race Mr. Chaplin was opposed by his old confederate, Captain Machell. Until some difference of opinion arose between them Rhysworth had been schooled at Limber Magna by Machell and Richardson, and it may well be imagined how tense was their anxiety when the victory of Rhysworth over their own horse seemed almost certain.

In 1873 Mr. Chaplin, who, as previously mentioned, had been elected a member of the Jockey Club in 1865, succeeded Lord Calthorpe in the office of Steward. In the affairs of the Club he took an active part, inclining rather to the left wing of racing opinion. In his view the Club was a single polity, possessing plenary powers of legislation, with authority to interpret its own laws, and to enforce obedience by its own officers. In 1869 a campaign for reform was opened which extended over some years. The leader of the movement was Sir Joseph Hawley. The charter touched such questions as the dates of the racing season, the conditions of two-year-old racing—the limitation of handicaps to four-year-olds and upwards, together with certain

proposals concerning betting. Mr. Chaplin joined Sir Joseph and became his principal supporter. In Hawley, Mr. Chaplin had a leader of ability and accomplishments, one who found on the race-course, as Dr. Johnson said he did at Ranelagh, "an expression and gay sensation of the mind such as he never experienced anywhere else". When the hours of racing did not claim him, Hawley spent his leisure in literary pursuits, and in the enjoyment of a library which bore witness to the exercise of his refined taste and considerable cultivation.

Hawley had won the Derby on four occasions. He was a first-rate judge of racing, and his authority was respected. But he entered on his self-imposed task with measures couched in terms of arrogance, and presented in preambles at once intemperate and aggressive. Mr. Chaplin's papers include a mass of documents relative to the impassioned debates which the reform movement occasioned, including critical correspondence with his colleagues ; but their study in these days is as profitless and fatiguing as the perusal of the musty pages of Hansard. Mr. Chaplin preserved the most detailed notes, covering many sheets of paper, of the points and arguments for the speeches which it is presumed he delivered. Judging from the mass of this material, it would seem that the habits of the Club of 1840 were still tolerated a generation later. In the spacious days of Greville and Bentinck a speaker was said to be heard with great advantage for two hours at a meeting of the Jockey Club ! Admiral Rous led the opposition to Hawley's proposals of reform with a vigour of pungent criticism suitable to the quarter-deck. Indeed, the functions

assumed by the Admiral at this date recall the severe and satirical lines of Warton :¹

With critic skill o'er dubious bets preside,
The low dispute, or kindle, or decide :
All empty wisdom and judicious prate,
Of distanc'd horses gravely fix the fate ;
And with paternal care unwearied watch
O'er the nice conduct of a daring match.

At times the temperature must have been sensibly increased by the fiery old sailor, if the following extract from one of his many letters to Mr. Chaplin reflects his tone and temper during the discussions. After observing that if several of the proposed new rules were passed he should decline to act as steward, he proceeds :

Then with respect to your restriction on Handicapping, on which I flattered myself I was an authority and that my experience might give me some weight, I was again in a minority. Charles Greville, Peel and myself issued these Rules, and the Club had the good sense to accept them without comment. I am worn out. Look out for another man to take my place. I am nobody, but sincerely and affectionately yours,

H. J. Rous.

No doubt the Admiral had cause for resentment. In Hawley he found an expert in all the arts of debating antagonism and dialectical display. The Master of Leybourne had inherited the parliamentary gifts of

¹ Thomas Warton wrote *Newmarket: a Satire*, in 1751, about the date of the *incunabula* of the Jockey Club. It is to be found in vol. ii. of the collection of his poetical works, of which the fifth edition appeared in 1802. Warton was Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, and Poet Laureate. He knew something of the weakness of a certain type of race-goer, as appears from one of his lines :

" How great the pride to gain a jockey's ear."

his ancestors and had acquired some training in political affairs for a constituency that could have been his for the asking. He manipulated the Press, and engineered support for his schemes outside the Cabinet room. In actual debate he flung home truths at the heads of his colleagues, even the very elect. The result was inevitable. The Club resented his action, and the conservative forces within it developed powers of resistance which tact and conciliation would have averted or minimised. The spirit of obscurantist reaction grew ; and thus the most important reforms, which the ability and industry of Hawley and Mr. Chaplin had carried, sank beneath the wave of prejudiced opposition and were repealed after insufficient trial.

During his tenure of the office of President of the Board of Agriculture Mr. Chaplin's interest was sought for the project of repatriating Ormonde. An appeal was made to him to lend his name and authority to a scheme for raising £35,000 in order to bring the famous race-horse back to the land of his birth. The movement met with Mr. Chaplin's emphatic opposition on the ground of the infirmity which the great horse first exhibited on the downs at Kingsclere one misty morning shortly before he won the St. Leger, and which gave his devoted trainer a sleepless night. Mr. Chaplin's papers and correspondence dealing with the proposal to restore Ormonde to stud duties in England go fully into the pathology of roaring and into the question of the transmission of the fell disease. The subject, however, is so familiar that the arguments employed in the controversy are of no practical interest or importance.

Among a large number of Mr. Chaplin's papers which have been preserved are some which show appeals to his very considerable influence in regard to schemes for promoting the opening of new race-courses under the sanction of the Jockey Club. In 1909 there is a voluminous correspondence preserved concerning a plan for establishing races at Hull. Mr. Chaplin was pressed to elicit the King's interest in the undertaking and to persuade Lord Marcus Beresford to enter His Majesty's horses for some of the races it was intended to advertise for the new meeting. A rather dreary collection of letters includes the following delightful note from Lord Marcus which sparkles with his well-known wit :

BISHOPS GATE, ENGLEFIELD GREEN,
SURREY.

MY DEAR HARRY—I will do all I can to help the Meeting. [Then referring to a gift by his correspondent of some fish he had left for the porter at the Turf Club, he adds] I hope the porter at the Club enjoyed the trout. He thinks you are Isaac Walton at 6 st. 7 lb.—Yours, MARKIE.

In the year of the War Mr. Chaplin took an active part in the *vexata quaestio* of continuing racing during the period of hostilities. The stewards of the Jockey Club gladly enlisted his valuable assistance in negotiations with the Government, and in the presentation of their case in Parliament. The compromise, which was so wisely reached, was largely due to the tact and skill which he employed both in public and private in the handling of a very difficult problem.

An attempt has been made in these pages to trace the activities of Mr. Chaplin on the Turf. From

prominent participation in the administrative business of Newmarket, and from the management of the interests of his stable, Mr. Chaplin passed to a more intimate experience of the ambitions, vanities, and jealousies of parliamentary and official life. To this scene he brought the expression of those qualities of geniality, loyalty, and discipline which had marked his conduct in a very different theatre ; but one in which some of the most distinguished leaders of political connections in public affairs have sustained parts conspicuously agreeable with the lighter graces of social intercourse and with the serious prosecution of racing interests.

In the days when political duties in the House of Commons claimed his unremitting attendance, Mr. Chaplin was often heard with pleasure on the subject of his experiences on the Turf. There must still be some survivors of the era when obstruction was a science, and dilatory speech an art, and when sittings on Government nights were prolonged into hours long after the sun had penetrated the dishevelled chamber. On such occasions, over a merry supper in the dining-room—at the round table sacred to members of the Government—the Squire would be tempted to recall some of his exploits of bygone days ; to tell of his lead in some well-planned manœuvre, resulting in a successful coup ; of the care and secrecy employed in a trial of two-year-olds until one with 10 lb. superiority emerged from the test ; of the subsequent little race for a £100 Plate, chosen for the enterprise, with Fordham for the jockey, and how the good thing just won. “ I suppose the Stable backed the winner, Squire ? ” some artless young Under-Secretary would

inquire ; and then who can forget the broad smile so suggestive of the answer, and of the unaffected pleasure of the reminiscence ?

Sometimes, the old habit of confidence in the merits of a horse, founded on the report of an owner or a trainer, would return to him. When Dieudonné had beaten Jeddah in an obviously delusive trial shortly before the Derby of 1898, and Duke and Duchess had been led to think that at last the Blue Riband would be won in the straw jacket, Mr Chaplin, to whom the business had been imparted, confidently recommended his colleagues of the Cabinet, who were so minded, to have a stake on the Lord President's horse. Alas ! great was the mortification and poignant the annoyance of the most eminent survivor of that Administration to find his £50 lost, and the winner returned at 100 to 1. " So that is racing," was the contemptuous and embittered comment. To which the answer is in the affirmative ; with the additional observation that the philosophy which is counselled in the changing and unaccountable conditions of political life and party leadership is required in just the same measure by any novice who dabbles in mere speculation, whether on the Turf or on the Stock Exchange.

Again, there were occasions when Mr. Chaplin would be led to discourse on questions relating to the breeding of race-horses or the respective merits of the leading families in Turf history. It was very interesting to hear him when a racing subject arose after dinner at Moulton Paddocks, and when the talk would range over the achievements of Gladiateur, St. Simon, and Ormonde, or the abilities of Fordham,

Archer, and Cannon as contrasted with those of the modern school of race-riding. At such times the host, the first authority on international finance, maintained a puzzled silence, wondering at the extent of technical knowledge which seemed to be the necessary equipment of the society it was his pleasure to cultivate, and yet admiring the easy familiarity of his guests with the *apparatus* of the Calendar and the pedigrees of the stud book.

Lord Chaplin was at Newmarket on October 13, 1922. It was his last day there, and he had truly earned his *bene decessit*. It was the afternoon of the Middle Park Plate; and, as he stood in the consecrated space reserved for the oligarchs of the Turf, men wondered how many great horses he must have seen in that classic test of two-year-old ability. He knew the race from the date of its foundation. The Rake, whom he had beaten with Hermit in the Derby, was the first winner on the roll. He had seen such famous horses of the past as Pero Gomez, Prince Charlie, Petrarch, Melton, Donovan, Isinglass, Galtee More, Bayardo, and others win over the testing six furlongs. With them and their history he was familiar. But he looked as if he knew he was watching the race for the last time. His friends knew it only too well. He had entered on the decline of life, and the fatal sign was on his brow.

He suffered throughout the long winter months and until the late spring came, and then the flame of life went wavering down. For a brief spell there was unconsciousness; but, perhaps, before the mind, as it faded away, there came through the mist of years some visions of the past—the breezy downs of

Hambleton where the talk of Yorkshiremen was shrewd and good to hear—that hot afternoon when the young Hermit was led into the Ring, the horse of so many hopes and so many anxieties—the moving pageant of Epsom, and the shouts of the crowd, as a rose-coloured jacket drew nearer and nearer—the figure of Machell at Bedford Cottage with pencil and paper working out a handicap—and then the busy hum of Newmarket as he rode out in the cool air of the early morning, passing the sheeted strings of horses at their work and the familiar landmarks of the Heath, until he saw that he had come to the Turn of the Lands.

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